PLAY METER Magazine

VOLUME 23, No. 7 FOR THE COIN-OP ENTERTAINMENT/FEC INDUSTRY JUNE 1997

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Great American Recreation sets out in new directions

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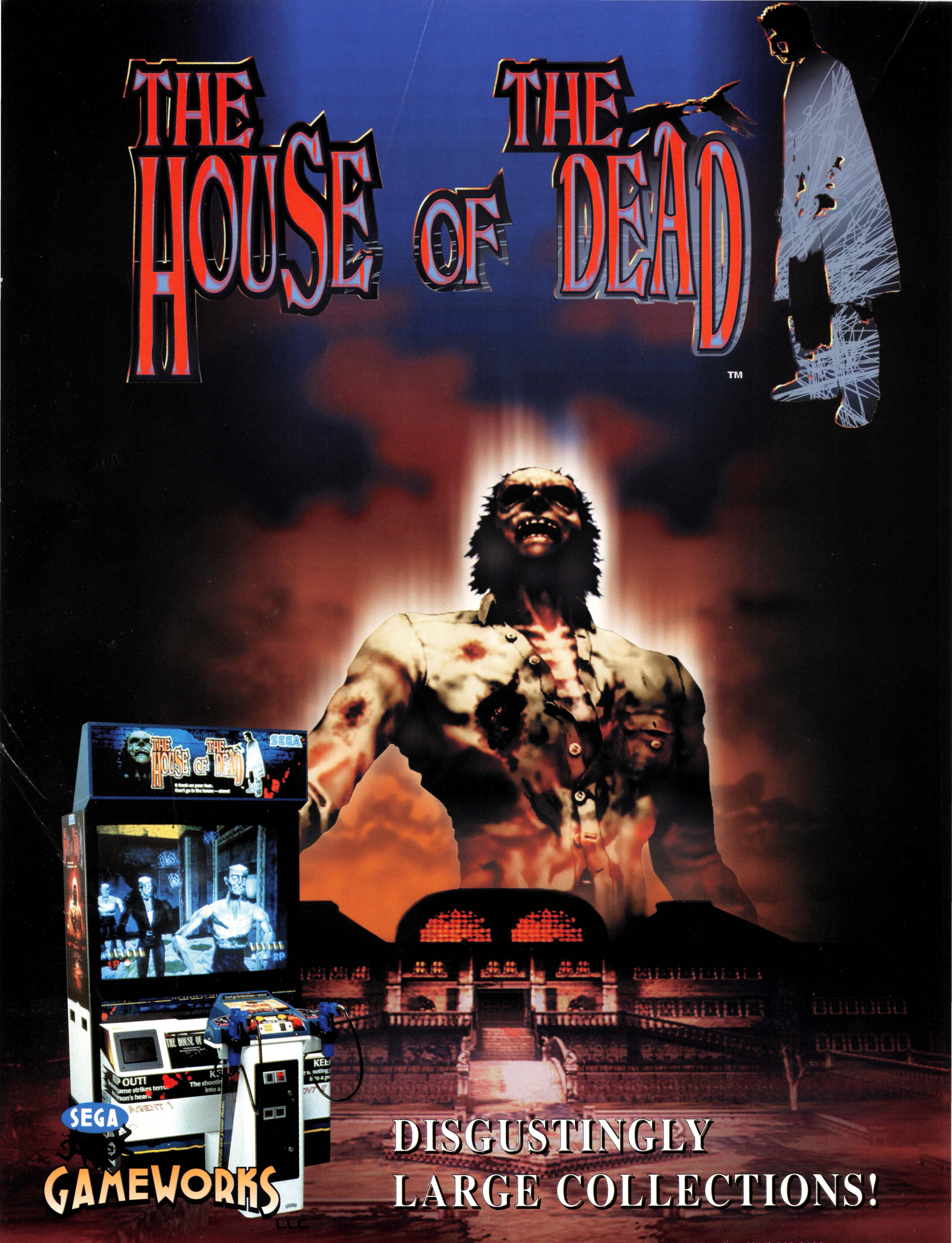
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News BULLETIN

Intel releases new Pentium II processor

Early last month, the Intel Corp. released the new Pentium II microprocessor, which the company says will combine innovative and proven technologies to bring new levels of performance and visual computing. The Pentium II, which was introduced at speeds ranging between 233 and 300 MHz, combines the advanced technologies of the Pentium Pro processor and the graphics capabilities of Intel's MMX media enhancement. This new chip will serve as the basis for a coin-op specification released at the end of April during the Computer Game Developer's Conference. (For more on this issue turn to "Through the Looking Glass.")

"With the expansion of visual computing into business, the performance of both processors and PCs must increase more than ever before," said Paul Otellini, executive vice president at Intel. "Among new users, we envision the PC routinely translating all type of raw data into rich 3-D models in seconds, helping users better assimilate the information at hand. Interactive business transactions will combine video, realistic graphics, and audio to educate or demonstrate new products or services to potential customers.

Video violence addressed in Washington

A proposed code of conduct regarding the sale and operation of video games with violent content was scheduled to be presented to members of the U.S. Senate last month when the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) held its annual meeting in Washington, D.C., last month, the group's executive director Bob Fay told Play Meter.

The draft agreement was the result of a meeting held in March at the Amusement Showcase Intl. between Senate staffers and representatives of AAMA and the Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA). The Senate staff members were initially seeking to place video games with violent content in restrictive areas, but agreed to hold any action for 90 days while the industry drafted the proposed code of conduct.

"We've got to first take it up to the Senate and if they sign off then we will have something to announce," Fay said prior to the Washington conference, which will also see members of AAMA and AMOA lobbying on Capitol Hill for other issues, including the authorization of a new dollar coin.

AAMA's parental advisory committee as well as Fay, association president Rick Kirby, and government relations head Eliot Portnoy have been working with AMOA's government relations committee and lobbyist Valis & Associates to draft the plan.

AAMA names new slate of officers

At is annual meeting in Washington last month, the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) named its new board of directors, including a new slate of officers. New officers include: Mike Rudowicz of Konami (president); Rich Babich of The Colorado Game Exchange (vice president); Frank Cosentino of Namco (secretary); Joe Sladek of Skee-Ball (treasurer); Joe Dillon of Williams Bally/Midway (assistant secretary); and Ron Carrara of Lazer-Tron (assistant treasurer).

LaZer Park center opens in Times Square

New York City's newest high-tech entertainment center, LaZer Park, has opened in the popular Times Square area with feature attractions including a Thomson Entertainment Venturer S2 simulator, a Battletech unit from Virtual Worlds, and an LT-IX laser tag installation from LaserTron among other high-tech offerings. The venue will also offer video and skill redemption games, virtual reality attractions, and the Megabites snack bar. For more information, contact LaZer Park, (212)398-3060; Web site (http://www.lazerpark.com).

Tobacco fight moves to courts and Congress

In late April a federal judge in North Carolina handed down a two-sided ruling in a challenge to the Food and Drug Administration's move to regulate tobacco, including sales through vending machines. The judge ruled that while the FDA can regulate tobacco as a drug, it cannot restrict advertising of the product.

The national Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) was a party to the lawsuit through its submission of affidavits challenging the agency's right to regulate tobacco, and the association is reportedly planning to lobby the FDA and Congress and circulate a Citizen's Petition to obtain the right to operate vending machines that are equipped with lock-out devices in non-age-restricted locations. As part of its efforts over the past months, AMOA has solicited help from members in the form of contacting Congressional representatives and the local media as well as a $1 donation for every cigarette vending machine operated by association members. AMOA has also sent out sample letters, citing a study last year by the Center for Disease Control that only two percent of underage smokers purchase cigarettes from vending machines, and a draft of model tobacco regulation legislation.

In a press release put out last month, AMOA reiterated its longstanding support for the use of lock-out devices for vending machines in non-age-restricted locations. FDA rules would bar them from such locations. According to recent studies, more than 90 percent of cigarette vending machines are currently in age-restricted locations.

"The industry wants to improve on this number," said Mark Levine of Melo-Tone Vending in Somerville, Mass., and vice-chairman of AMOA's tobacco vending committee. "Our goal is 100 percent, and the use of lock-out devices can make this possible. That is why the state of Florida just passed a law requiring these devices in non-age-restricted areas. This is the logical solution. Considering the tremendous resources of various parties involved in the tobacco debate, we hope and believe that Congress will take the time to learn the facts. In doing so, Congress can help eliminate underage tobacco sales and, at the same time, save a U.S. (vending) industry made up of hard working small business people."

Redemption bills in Texas and Missouri

At least one version of a controversial redemption bill being considered by the Texas legislature, Senate Bill 1701, has died in the state Senate, Play Meter columnist Tom Fricke reported. That bill would have prohibited all amusement redemption except games which involve "substantial skill." However, an amended second bill proposed in the House had been passed by that body of the legislature as well as a Senate committee. The bill would keep in place prize limitations but defines as a criminal gambling device any machines that include accounting and percentaging features.

Another bill in the state of Missouri, which would have allowed non-skill based redemption with prize limitations set at $25, died when legislators failed to take action before the close of the session. According to Fricke, members of the legislature were dead-

News BULLETIN

locked over a separate off-track gaming bill. Fricke, who has spent the last month monitoring and advising on both issues when possible, has taken time off from his "Legal Eagle" column this month. Look for commentary on both issues in next month's "Legal Eagle."

IAAPA and IAFEC issue a response to broadcast about ride safety

The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) and the International Association of Family Entertainment Centers (IAFEC) sent out safety information updates last month following a broadcast by ABC's "20/20" news magazine, which used several recent incidents to raise doubts about the safety of rides and the laxity of government inspection. "It is important for the public to hear that there are something like 290 million visits made to fixed-site amusement parks and attractions every year and many more millions of rides taken," wrote IAAPA executive director John Graff in a memo to all association members. "The number of injuries serious enough to require admission to a hospital are estimated by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to be about 75. The number of fatalities each year has averaged between one and two.

"If one estimates the number of rides actually taken very conservatively at two per guest, or 580 million rides, that means the odds against being injured seriously enough to require admission to a hospital are about one in seven million and the odds against being fatally injured are one in 250 million."

Both organizations went on to say that less than 20 percent of ride-related injuries are caused by design, operation, or maintenance problems; that most injuries are the result of horseplay, patron negligence, and human error unrelated to the condition of the ride; and that historically rides have been ranked near the very bottom of the list of injury causing products and equipment by the CPSC. For more information, contact IAAPA, (703)836-4800; fax (703)836-4801; or IAFEC, (603)464-6498; fax (603)464-6497.

Skee-Ball named as Benchmark Entertainment's international distributor

Skee-Ball Inc. has been appointed by Benchmark Entertainment to market and sell the latter's product lines in overseas markets such as South America, the Pacific Rim, the Middle East, Mexico, and Europe. Skee-Ball executive vice president Mark Kane said he believes this venture will prove rewarding for both companies. "Skee-Ball will help Benchmark increase sales utilizing our established relationships and aggressive actions in the international markets," commented Kane. "Benchmark will, in turn, complement Skee-Ball's product line for our overseas clients."

In other Skee-Ball news, the company has brought 15-year coin-op veteran Dennis Nordman on board as the newest member of its creative design team. Nordman's experience includes stints at Mylstar Electronics as a video game designer and Bally's and William's pinball divisions. He holds five U.S. patents for pinball games and has won a Best New Game award from AMOA for *Elvira and The Party Monsters.* Skilled in model and prototype building, Nordman will be assisting Skee-Ball with the creation and implementation of new games and technology.

Data East moves to new office

All coin-op functions including sales, marketing, customer service, shipping and accounting for Data East will be conducted from the company's new office, 574 Weddell Dr., Suite 1, Sunnyvale, CA 94089; (408)734-5770; fax (408)734-8257; customer service, (408)734-9024; parts/customer service fax, (408)734-8940. Staff members include Jeanne Petit, senior vice president; Steve Ward, director of sales; Keith Miyamoto, controller; Kelly McDonald, manager of marketing and customer service; and Marvin Long, manager of warehouse and purchasing.

Bits and pieces

☞ Sega Pinball released its newest pinball, *The Lost World: Jurassic Park,* over the Memorial Day weekend to coincide with the release of the movie sequel of the same name. North American sales and marketing manager Jolly Backer said the game has "plenty for the great player while at the same time making a game that is understandable to and enjoyable for the average player, by far the largest portion of the player base."

☞ The company formerly known as Debit Dial Vending is now DDV Electronics. The firm is located at 3678 Bayshore Road, Deer Park, NY 11729; (518)667-1800 or (800)931-3503; fax (518)667-5358.

☞ Prime Locations of California, a vending location service, can now be found on the World Wide Web (http://www.wwc.com/vending/aaa.htm).

☞ Sega GameWorks opened its second amusement facility in Las Vegas last month. The new location, which is 50,000 square feet, is designed on the same pattern used for the first 30,000-square-foot facility that opened in March in Seattle, Wash. (For more on the first facility, see the Family Fun section of this month's issue. Look for coverage of the Las Vegas opening next month.)

☞ This year's EXIME trade show is scheduled for Aug. 13-14, World Trade Center, Mexico City, Mexico. Contact: W.T. Glasgow Inc., 16066 South Park Ave., South Holland, IL 60473; (708)333-9292; fax (708)333-4086.

☞ The toll-free number for Fun Enterprises, which appeared in a May classified advertisement, should have read (888)386-3300.

☞ Louis Rummenigge, formerly of Mondial International and most recently Konami of America, has been appointed international account executive for Rock-Ola Mfg. He will be based in the company's Rosemont, Ill., office. "I am very excited about the challenge I've been presented with," Rummenigge said. "Rock-Ola's new and revolutionary technology is a commitment to its customers worldwide. The dedication the company has for the coin-op industry was the key factor that brought me over." ▲

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CGDC: Window to the future

Once Microsoft and Intel threw their hats into the coin-op ring and rallied behind a PC game platform, the subject dominated industry circles. Game developers recently met in California to learn more about the platform and the coin-op market. Said Ross Smith of Quantum 3D: "You now have a delivery vehicle that operators can afford and is reusable. That's the key."

52

4th Family Fun Edition

Looking for the most information on today's family entertainment market? You've come to the right place. We've dedicated 32 pages to the topic and highlighted food service, insurance, prize merchandise, mom and pop and big name FECs, plus frequently asked questions on redemption and ways to improve your location. A must read!

82

Coinman: Dave Corriveau

Dave Corriveau's forte was games, and Buster Corley's specialty was food. The two ran separate businesses next to each other until, against all odds and without the benefit of research, the Arkansas entrepreneurial duo combined both disciplines under one roof and created a new concept in entertainment—Dave & Buster's. "We were betting the farm on this idea," confessed Dave.

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COVER

Great American Recreation has expanded its horizons from pool tables and cabinets to air hockey and foosball tables, plus child-size games. Pictured with *Kiddie Pool* and *Power Hockey,* (l-r): Robert Keelyn, national sales manager; David Celani, president; Dominic Celani, co-founder of D & D Cabinets, and Bob Palumbo, production manager.

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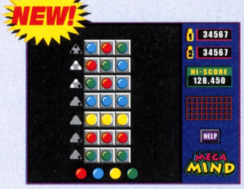

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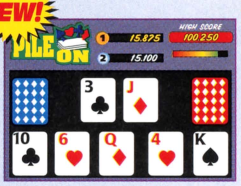

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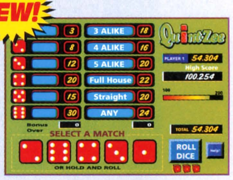

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FROM THE **EDITOR**

Looking for PLATFORM SHOES AND BELL BOTTOM JEANS?

It's hard to believe that this is the fourth year we have devoted an issue to family entertainment. Some may view this as a rather new medium of entertainment and brag that they are beginning to cover it, but we've been tracking trends in family entertainment since Bonnie and I attended our first Fun Expo in 1992.

But we didn't view it as a fad that could be covered in one issue and forgotten. We began a monthly column called "Family Focus" in which we highlighted some facet of the family entertainment market, whether it was locations or some timely event.

Valerie Cognevich
Editor

The entertainment industry does not shut the door on one segment and open it for another. It's constantly evolving, which describes it even more than mere change. When I began working for Play Meter 20 years ago, pinball was just making the transition to solid state amid protests from operators who simply didn't want it to change. During the seemingly short two decades, there have been many events shaping the industry, all helping it evolve.

Play Meter was there covering video poker issues throughout the country and Canada. You would have been hard pressed to find so much information anywhere else. We devoted our resources to letting our readers know what was going on. We still monitor that industry and report new action. We, like the industry, don't close the door on one aspect of the industry and move on to another.

While we take great pride in assessing the industry's issues and writing about what is happening in the FEC segment, we have not abandoned the street operator and his unique needs. We ran two articles on buying and selling a business; we must have gotten a dozen calls for copies of that from our readers. The February issue is chock full of tax tips for operators preparing for April 15, and that too, is one of our most requested issues. We've listened and watched the industry evolve and have evolved right along with it.

If you read the interview in this issue with Dave Corriveau of Dave & Buster's you'll realize that even the best laid plans sometimes have some bumpy roads to travel. Dave & Buster's may be an industry icon now, but in 1982 the concept was locked inside the heads of two very determined young men who took every rejection as a further challenge to succeed.

But there's more to the story than two young men with a dream. Yes, the dream came true, perhaps even exceeding their own expectations, but they didn't stop and say we're done. They were relentless in their first endeavor and just as relentless, learning from mistakes, in the rest. They will eventually have nearly 60 Dave & Buster's locations throughout the United States and even more overseas. And each location is an evolution of know-how and experience.

The entertainment industry is evolving, drawing on the experiences of those who have gone ahead, those who have blazed new trails. Some may call it cyclical, and that's OK. It's the same thing really.

Remember platform shoes? Yes, you're still reading the same editorial, bear with me. If you watch old movies you'll see platform shoes. And shoulder pads for that matter. Today you see platform shoes and shoulder pads. Now does that mean that we're in a cycle? Yes and no. Yes, because,...well, we're seeing shoulder pads and platform shoes. No, because both have evolved from where they were before.

My mom, who never throws anything out, lives by the motto that if you hold onto something long enough, it'll come back in style. She has my prom dresses (that my girls wouldn't be caught dead in), my sister's bell bottom jeans (well, maybe some day), and assorted other apparel my sister and I didn't even feel was worth taking when we moved out some 30 years ago!

Even if some of it does come back in style, it certainly will have evolved, say into something you don't have to iron! Even clothes, no matter how much alike the style appears to be, will evolve with different fabric, new designs, and new technology in construction.

What was our industry like 30 years ago? What will it be like 30 years from now? Let's just concentrate on what our industry's like today. That's what Play Meter does, and does pretty well if I do say so myself! We may not make a big deal about covering topics that we should be covering anyway as part of doing a good job, but you can believe we're on top of the issues and trends.

Let's not take a lesson from my mom and save everything we're using now in the hope that if we hang onto it long enough it'll come back in style. Well, maybe the *Pac-Man.* ▲

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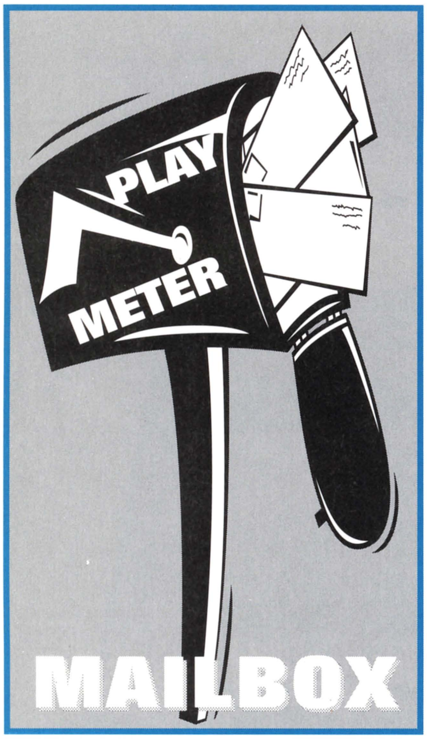

I want my pinhead!

[Editor's Note: We received a letter signed Miguel Valdez. He shared his thoughts on ASI and then asked about the "pinhead" promotion he had seen at the show. We weren't aware of it, but planned to print the letter and ask if anyone knew more details. Then we received another letter signed Brian Hannover that was virtually identical to the first letter. This one, too, raved about the show and mentioned the pinhead promotion and, yes, wanted more details. A coincidence? I'm not finished. Still another letter arrived, identical format to the others, this time signed Barry Alford, who noted that he had seen some really neat pinhead T-shirts and hats and noted how much his players would like them. Maybe the pinhead promotion is panning out; I know I was impressed that someone had gone to so much trouble to promote it. We'd like to share those letters because the comments are interesting, and if we get any feedback on the pinhead promotion, we'll let you know. By the way, one letter will suffice!]

ASI in Vegas was the best show I've been to yet! As per usual, there was a lot of crap, but you didn't have to look far to find some very strong product. I was particularly excited about the new pins. The new backbox on Sega's *Star Wars* is a facelift long overdue. And *NBA Fastbreak* is a total gas. If the promised linkability pans out, it may just lift pinball from the doldrums.

Speaking of pinball, I saw several people wearing "pinhead" apparel. What's with that? My loyal pin customers would go bananas over that kind of stuff. If you know where I can order caps or shirts or whatever, I'd be very grateful.

Barry Alford
Omaha, NE

……

After a wonderful week in Las Vegas, I would like to share a few thoughts regarding ASI '97.

First of all I would like to congratulate AAMA for doing such a wonderful job. This year's ASI was by far one of the best I have attended in a very long time. The show had a much friendlier atmosphere and was more open to a broader audience than it has been in the past.

I cannot remember the last time I went to a trade show and was able to take away as many interesting tidbits of information being offered. I particularly enjoyed the operators' party, which gave operators like me the opportunity to mix it up with some of the industry's movers and shakers.

Secondly, I was enthused by all the new and exciting promotional campaigns kicking off some promising games for the future. One that particularly caught my eye was the "pinhead" campaign. I'm not sure who or what it's all about but it sure caught my eye. Perhaps you could shed some light on which manufacturer was behind the idea. I would really like to get some product for giveaways of some sort.

In closing, I would just like to reiterate what a pleasure it was to attend this year's ASI. I truly hope that AAMA can keep up the good work and continue this interactive atmosphere it has brought to the table.

Brian Hannover
Brookfield, WI

……

ASI, with its new name has come and gone. Vegas was impressive, but I wasn't that awed by the show itself. A new name. No big deal. Aside from new virtual reality games, I didn't find much new to get excited about.

When will manufacturers come up with something new that players won't tire of quickly? When will they stop churning out games without supporting them like they should? Video is still as popular as ever, but it is getting harder to buy the really expensive games.

Pinball is still pinball. There have been some good innovations; the look of the games are definitely changing. Pinball has the potential to be vastly popular, but is largely unsupported by the industry. I was impressed by a hat that I was given that read "I'm a pinhead." To me, this is a good place to start supporting pinball. It is really funny and I think my players would like one of these hats.

If we get more product support to the end users, I think the industry would be greatly helped. As operators, we can't do everything in the way of supporting games.

Miguel Valdez
Beaumont, TX

……

Comments from readers

[Editor's Note: When we get back the equipment poll ballots, there are often comments scribbled in the margins. Here are a few of those words of wisdom from our readers:]

"Let's not fool ourselves anymore. It is the end of video games, pinballs, and CD players for street operators. New technology and the high price of equipment is taking over. Take my advice, start looking for a real job!"

"There is no future in this business. The only people

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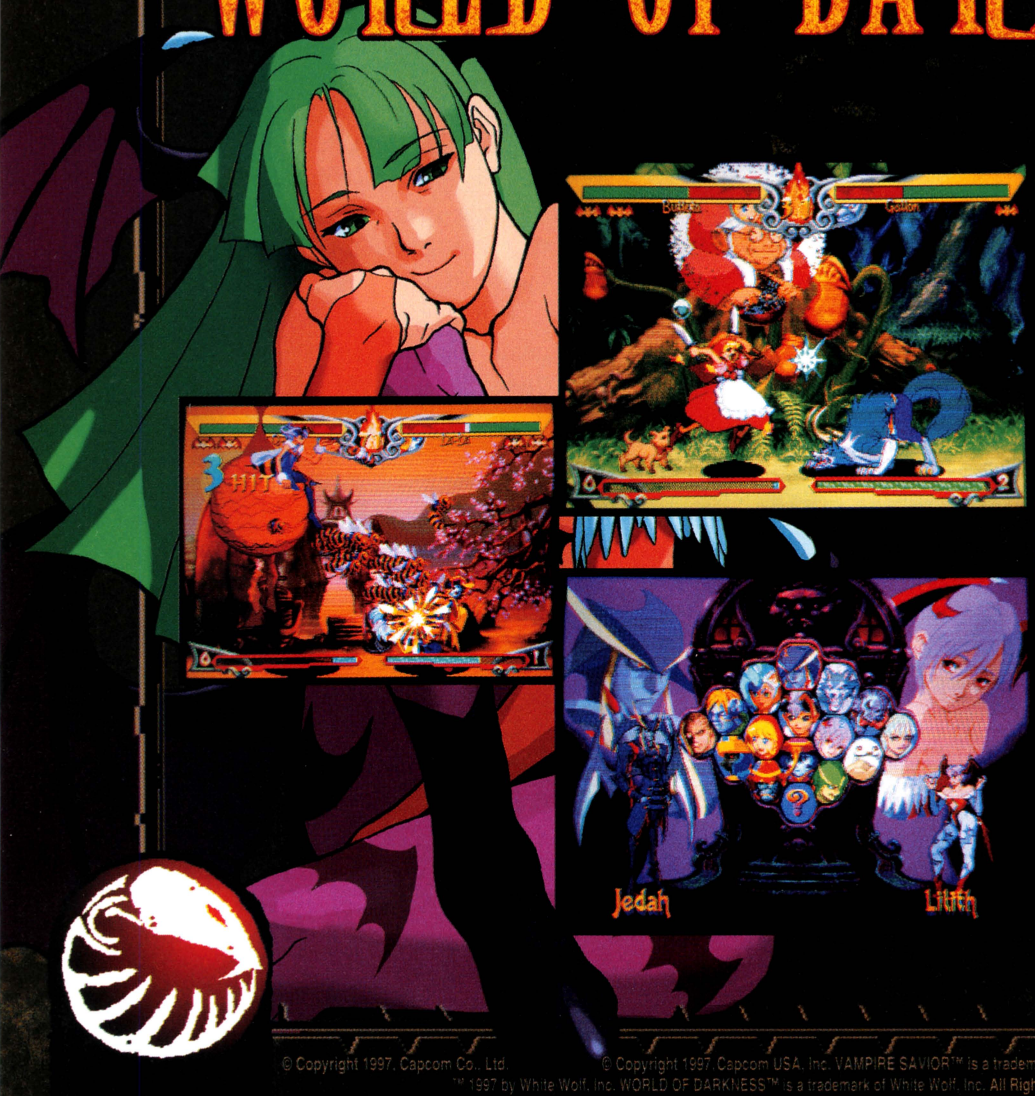

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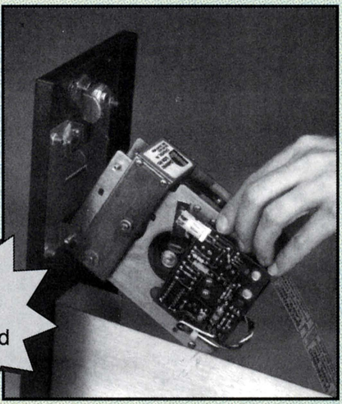

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who are not smart are operators because they don't know of any other way of making a living. It is a very stupid business. We buy equipment for $10,000 today and two years later the machines are worth $500."

"There are no 10s. The take is down over the winter (a harsh winter), which caused a slowdown vs. the average take."

……

Ms. Pac-Man's Appeal

This is concerning Bonnie Theard's "Up Front" column in the Feb. 1997 issue. I tend to agree with most of what was said, except for the part about *Ms. Pac-Man.* I think that the big reason *Ms. Pac-Man* was a mega hit and is still showing up on the charts is something that the game manufacturers have overlooked for years.

Females as well as males play this game. Also both sexes enjoy *Centipede, Tetris, Shoot to Win,* and a few others. I don't believe one in a hundred girls will play Gung Fu or as I refer to them, kick-'em-in-the-groin games. When you have twice as many players willing to play you should make a lot more money.

A couple of years ago one manufacturer brought on board an all female design team to design games females would play. They missed the whole point! No boys would be caught dead playing a cutsie girl game. So again, they have limited the player appeal.

Maybe someone will see the light and bring out more games acceptable to both sexes and everybody will be happy.

R.A. O'Kane
Monterey, CA

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"We are looking for ten sites across the USA to showcase our NEW laser tag game. If you own a FEC and do not have laser tag as one of your attractions, we'll install our latest equipment within 30 days -- you pay nothing for the latest in entertainment technology. You'll become one of our SHOWCASE SITES."

Doug Wilson, Sales Manager
Ascension Productions Inc.

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> Ron Rameson
> Camelot Parks

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>
> Joe Mutter, Operator
> Paramount Parks

> *"Our Lazer Runner System is one of the most popular attractions we have. People line up to play!"*
>
> Jim Saxe
> Putt Putt Golf N Games

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We have ten Showcase Systems in total. Three have already been placed. If you are interested in one of the remaining seven systems, call NOW.

Our installation crews will all be on the road installing these "Showcase Systems" immediately. Call us now if you want to be considered as a Showcase Site. You pay nothing for the equipment if you are selected.

CALL NOW

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Equipment Poll

VIDEO KITS

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	Tekken 3 *(Namco)*	8.69	56
2.	Golden Tee 3D Golf *(Incred. Tech)*	8.66	888
3.	Area 51 *(Atari)*	8.40	985
4.	Police Trainer *(P&P)*	8.09	91
5.	Die Hard Arcade *(Sega)*	7.57	322
6.	Three *(Capcom)*	7.44	34
7.	Tekken 2 *(Namco)*	7.27	948
8.	Point Blank *(Namco)*	7.00	512
9.	World Class Bowling *(Incredible Tech.)*	6.97	233
10.	X-Men vs. Street Fighter *(Capcom)*	6.92	261
11.	19XX *(Capcom)*	6.78	74
12.	Metal Slug *(SNK)*	6.69	410
13.	Tournament Solitaire *(Dynamo)*	6.64	493
14.	Lethal Enforcers *(Konami)*	6.63	1618
15.	Tekken *(Namco)*	6.55	791
16.	Maximum Hangtime *(Midway)*	6.50	45
17.	Bust-A-Move *(SNK)*	6.43	483
18.	Raiden Fighters *(Fabtek)*	6.29	58
19.	Soul Edge II *(Namco)*	6.19	207
20.	NBA Hangtime *(Midway)*	6.16	273
21.	Bust-A-Move Again *(Taito)*	6.13	460
22.	Super Puzzle Fighter II *(Capcom)*	6.13	34
23.	Raiden II *(Fabtek)*	6.03	785
24.	Street Fighter EX *(Capcom)*	5.93	*
25.	Viper Phase 1 *(Fabtek)*	5.89	278
26.	Street Fighter Alpha 2 *(Capcom)*	5.88	95
27.	Raiden DX *(Fabtek)*	5.85	346
28.	Soul Edge *(Namco)*	5.84	270
29.	Marvel Super Heroes *(Capcom)*	5.82	382
30.	Open Ice *(Midway)*	5.75	173

COUNTERTOPS

1.	Megatouch XL *(Merit)*	8.75	57
2.	Megatouch IV *(Merit)*	8.46	695
3.	Concorde 1 *(JVL)*	7.57	106
4.	Megatouch Tournament *(Merit)*	7.42	301
5.	Megatouch *(Merit)*	7.38	839
6.	Touchmaster *(Williams)*	7.05	342
7.	Magical Touch *(Micro)*	6.86	494

CLASSIC VIDEOS

1.	Out Run *(Sega)*	6.57	20
2.	Ms. Pac-Man *(Bally/Midway)*	6.32	*
3.	Galaga *(Bally/Midway)*	6.29	*
4.	Pole Position *(Atari)*	6.16	*
5.	Raiden *(Fabtek)*	5.89	*
6.	Centipede *(Atari)*	5.80	*

VIDEO DEDICATED

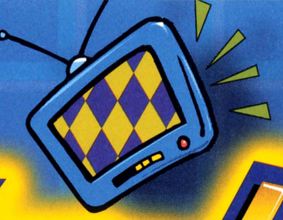
	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1.	Maximum Force *(Atari)*	8.96	58
2.	Tourn. 3D Golf *(In. Tech.)*	8.48	142
3.	Gun Blade NY *(Sega)*	7.60	438
4.	Time Crisis *(Namco)*	7.52	727
5.	Solitaire Challenge *(Dynamo)*	7.36	1292
6.	Rampage World Tour *(Midway)*	7.00	24
7.	Virtua Fighter 3 *(Sega)*	6.94	101
8.	Virtua Cop 2 *(Sega)*	6.63	737
9.	Killer Instinct 2 *(Midway)*	5.83	305
10.	Virtual On *(Sega)*	5.80	125
11.	Virtua Fighter 2 *(Sega)*	5.72	930
12.	Run and Gun 2 *(Konami)*	5.58	72

VIDEO SIMULATORS

1.	San Francisco Rush *(Atari)*	9.22	237
2.	Cruis'n World *(Midway)*	9.05	299
3.	Alpine Racer 2 *(Namco)*	8.53	169
4.	Daytona USA *(Sega)*	8.43	1941
5.	Alpine Surfer *(Namco)*	8.36	249
6.	Cruis'n USA *(Midway)*	8.27	1791
7.	Tokyo Wars *(Namco)*	7.90	82
8.	Wave Shark *(Konami)*	7.57	136
9.	Alpine Racer *(Namco)*	7.56	944
10.	Home Run Derby *(ICE)*	7.40	99
11.	Manx TT *(Sega)*	6.85	476
12.	Cyber Cycles *(Namco)*	6.67	804
13.	Sega Rally *(Sega)*	6.58	707
14.	OutRunners *(Sega)*	6.55	1723
15.	Wave Runner *(Sega)*	6.43	107
16.	COPS *(Atari)*	6.40	610
17.	Suzuka 8 Hours 2 *(Namco)*	6.33	1444
18.	Winding Heat *(Konami)*	6.25	103
19.	Ridge Racer 2 *(Namco)*	6.20	468
20.	Prop Cycle *(Namco)*	6.13	140
21.	Lucky & Wild *(Namco)*	6.00	1346
22.	Indy 500 Twin *(Sega)*	5.94	449

PINBALLS

1.	Attack From Mars *(Bally)*	8.22	703
2.	Scared Stiff *(Bally)*	8.14	349
3.	Junk Yard *(Williams)*	8.00	140
4.	The Addams Family *(Bally)*	7.65	3201
5.	Theatre of Magic *(Bally)*	7.47	1094
6.	Space Jam *(Sega)*	7.40	126
7.	Twister *(Sega)*	7.25	300
8.	Arabian Nights *(Williams)*	7.16	390
9.	Star Wars Trilogy *(Sega)*	6.92	51
10.	Star Trek: TNG *(Williams)*	6.78	1643
11.	World Cup Soccer *(Bally)*	6.65	1041
12.	Who Dunnit *(Bally)*	6.63	284
13.	Road Show *(Williams)*	6.52	725
14.	Apollo 13 *(Sega)*	6.46	377
15.	Twilight Zone *(Bally)*	6.27	1129



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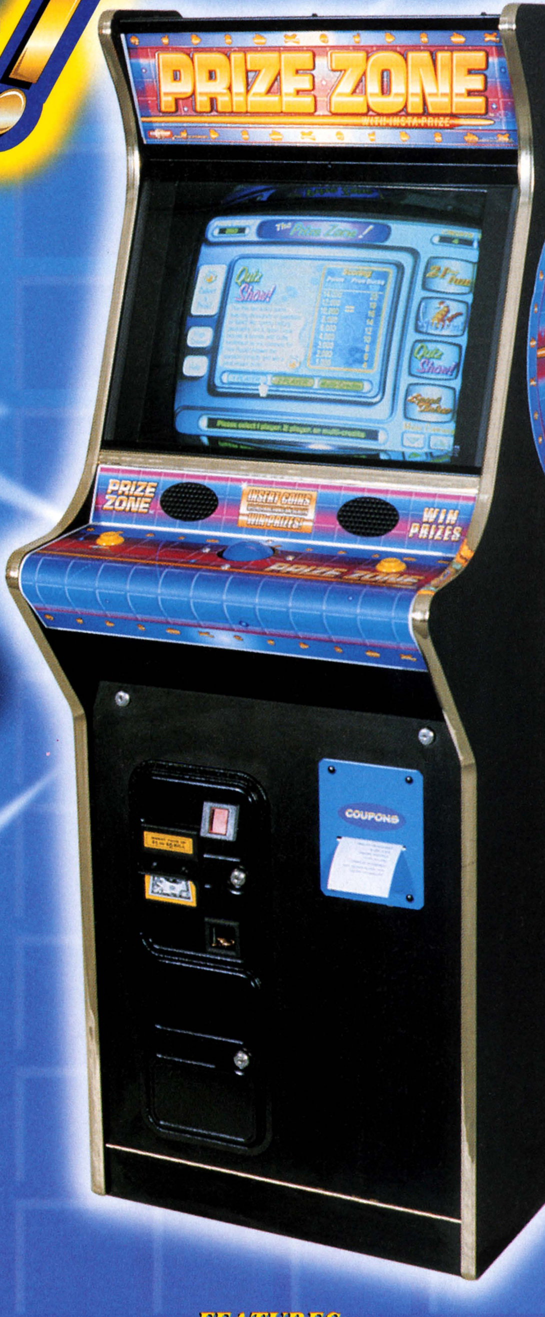
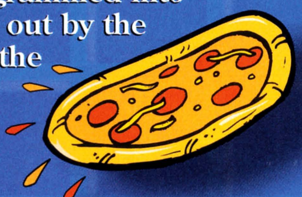


Prize Zone is the first multi-game prize machine for street locations. Players can play a variety of exciting skill games and acquire prize credits based upon how well they play. Prize credits are then exchanged for prizes programmed into the game. A coupon is printed out by the machine to be redeemed with the attendant.



PRIZES: Up to 15 different prizes can be used. No merchandise counter is required. Most of the prizes can be the items that are already sold at the location, such as food and drinks. Payout %'s are completely adjustable.

GAMES: Prize Zone offers 7 exciting SKILL games. All games feature Progressive Jackpots and Insta-Prize.™ Insta-Prize is our patented feature that allows players to win large prizes on a single play. Prizes such as a TV or a pizza can be won, in one game, without exceeding desired payout.

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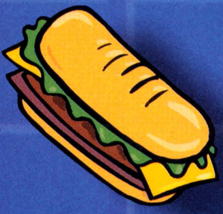
TRIVIA GAMES: Quiz Show, a photo trivia game.

CLASSICS: Scud Attack and Squirms.



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Equipment Poll

REDEMPTION

ALLEY BOWLERS

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. ICE Ball *(ICE)*	7.67	334
2. Striker *(Design Plus)*	7.50	526
3. Skee-Ball Too! *(Skee-Ball)*	7.40	197
4. Skee-Ball *(Skee-Ball)*	7.26	525
5. Skee-Ball Lightning *(Skee-Ball)*	6.75	679

SPORTS GAMES

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Hoop It Up *(Atari)*	7.66	721
2. Full Court Frenzy *(ICE)*	7.29	297
3. Super Shot *(Skee-Ball)*	7.00	431
4. Shoot to Win *(Smart)*	6.86	409
5. Championship Basketball *(Grayhound)*	6.83	91
6. Arm Champs *(Jaleco)*	6.75	152
7. Around the World *(UETD)*	6.75	181
8. Full Court Fever *(ICE)*	6.64	487
9. Hoop Shot *(ICE)*	6.00	97
10. UB-QB Football *(Skee-Ball)*	5.87	112
11. Putting Challenge II *(G.L. Tech.)*	5.63	51
12. Slugfest *(Williams)*	5.29	5

SINGLE COIN PUSHERS

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Jungle Jive *(Coastal)*	8.67	934

SINGLE CRANES

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Rainbow *(Rainbow)*	8.88	528
2. Big Choice *(Fun Merchants)*	7.68	458
3. Clean Sweep *(Smart)*	7.23	654
4. Gift Box *(Fun Merchants)*	7.20	391
5. Snack Attacker/Challenger *(AGE)*	7.20	469
6. Action Claw *(Fun Merchants)*	7.17	480
7. Classic Watch Crane *(Smart)*	6.67	448
8. Jumbo Crane *(Grayhound)*	6.33	489
9. Candy Crane *(Smart)*	6.14	368
10. Candy Man *(Fun Merchants)*	6.00	154
11. Key Catcher *(Am. Sammy)*	6.00	90
12. Skill Crane *(Grayhound)*	6.00	280
13. Watch Shoppe Crane *(CCI)*	6.00	*

CHILD-SIZE GAMES

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Awesome Toss 'Em *(Lazer-Tron)*	7.00	119
2. Toss Em *(UETD)*	7.00	185
3. Shoot To Win! Jr. *(Smart)*	6.56	488
4. Smart Toss Em *(Smart)*	6.50	404
5. Jr. All American *(UETD)*	6.43	46
6. Skee-Toss B.C. *(Skee-Ball)*	6.40	6
7. Feed Big Bertha *(Smart)*	6.36	268
8. Hightops *(Skee-Ball)*	5.83	53
9. Bozo Basketball *(Design Plus)*	5.63	60
10. Barnyard Babies *(Skee-Ball)*	5.25	37
11. Godzilla Wars Jr. *(Namco)*	5.25	96

ROLL DOWNS

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Spin To Win *(Lazer-Tron)*	7.06	584
2. Rollin' for Riches *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.25	80
3. Jungle Rama *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.17	196
4. Pokereno *(Seidel)*	6.00	*
5. Clown Roll Down *(Bay Tek)*	5.57	153

REDEMPTION

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
6. Quackers *(Seidel)*	5.33	52
7. Tic-Tac-Toe *(Skee-Ball)*	5.00	38

NOVELTY

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Cyclone *(ICE)*	9.27	1045
2. Treasure Falls *(Planet Earth)*	8.89	396
3. Round 'n Round *(Astro)*	8.71	533
4. Cyclone Jr. *(ICE)*	8.67	465
5. Colorama *(Bromley)*	8.33	695
6. Dinoscore *(Planet Earth)*	8.15	885
7. Flip N Win *(Planet Earth)*	7.63	304
8. Solar Spin *(Lazer-Tron)*	7.60	217
9. Pop-A-Slot *(Coastal)*	7.00	281
10. The Dealer *(CCI)*	7.00	31
11. Simple Simon *(Am. Sammy)*	6.63	90
12. Pop-A-Ball *(Coastal)*	6.60	84
13. Buddy Bear *(Smart)*	6.25	161
14. Pop-A-Tac-Toe *(Coastal)*	6.00	46
15. Hop-A-Tic-Tac-Toe *(Data East)*	5.83	30
16. Magic Mr. X *(Am. Sammy)*	5.80	37
17. Dump the Ump *(ICE)*	5.63	78
18. Steer Crazy *(Fun Industries)*	5.33	38
19. Dino Rally *(Bromley)*	5.25	199
20. Cosmo Gang *(Data East)*	5.13	2
21. Hungry Hungry Hippos *(ICE)*	5.00	25

COIN DROP GAMES

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Big Haul *(Benchmark)*	9.18	350
2. Smokin' Token *(Seidel)*	8.55	840
3. Goin' Rollin' *(Seidel)*	8.17	578
4. Sega Sports *(Sega)*	8.00	100
5. Wheel 'M In *(Bromley)*	7.45	822
6. Home Run Hitter *(CCI)*	7.00	493
7. The Mask *(Data East)*	6.80	592
8. Wheel of Fortune *(Fun House)*	6.80	280
9. Super Bank It II *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.75	105
10. Coin Circus *(Am. Sammy)*	6.56	208
11. Rock-N-Bowl *(Bromley)*	6.56	328
12. Super Rock-N-Bowl *(Bromley)*	6.20	103
13. Addams Family Values *(Midway)*	6.00	224
14. Aftershock *(Lazer-Tron)*	5.92	449

GUN GAMES

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Boom Ball *(Meltec)*	6.60	11
2. Big Mouth *(Meltec)*	6.25	79
3. Knock-Down *(Meltec)*	6.00	85
4. Miner's Revenge *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.00	86
5. Water Game *(Bob's Space)*	5.50	85

BOPPING/STOMPING GAMES

GAME	POINT VALUE	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. Spider Stompin *(Island)*	8.00	688
2. Wacky Gator *(Data East)*	7.15	270
3. Cracky Crab *(Namco)*	6.86	106
4. Mouse Attack *(ICE)*	6.75	79
5. Ribbit Racin *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.62	603
6. Robo-Bop *(Coastal)*	6.40	77
7. Whac-A-Mole *(Bob' Space)*	6.00	75

Results are based on monthly Equipment Poll ballot returns. Point Value = average of ballot ratings on a scale of 1-10; Longevity Points = standings on Best 60 combined game lists (#1 game receives 60 points, #2 game receives 59 points, etc.) **Indicates new or reappearing games.*

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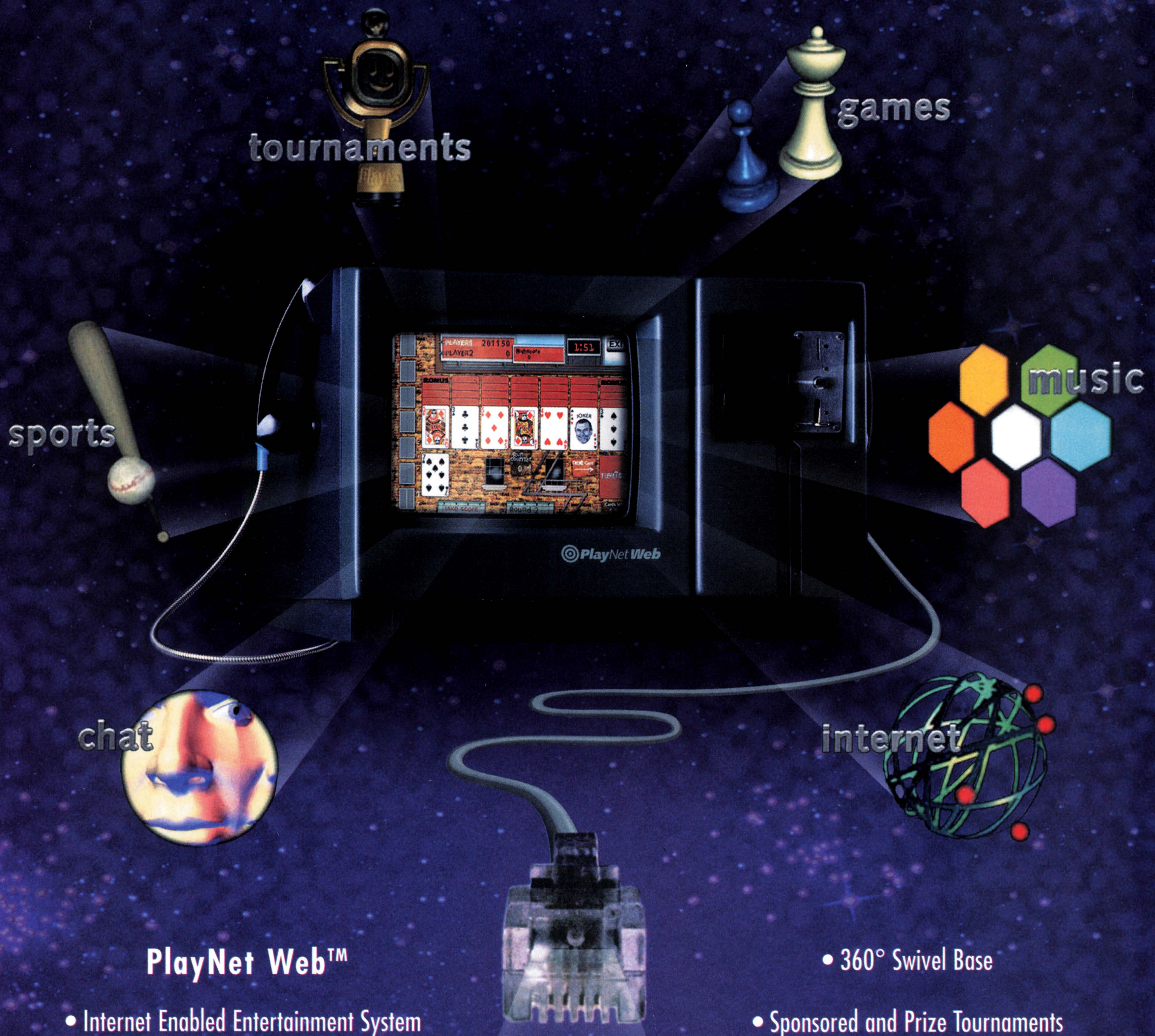
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COIN-OP NEWS

Beverage association announces on-premise music license agreement

The National Licensed Beverage Association (NLBA) and the three major performing rights organizations—ASCAP, BMI, and SESAC—have announced a new comprehensive group license agreement for the on-premise license beverage industry that incorporates fees to cover music from all sources. Only location-owned jukeboxes are covered by the agreement. Operator-owned units are covered under existing copyright agreements.

NLBA will offer the new agreement to all on-premise members, and it will be retroactive to the beginning of this year. The association will administer the group license agreement, which does not preclude individual members from entering into individual licenses with the performing rights organizations.

According to NLBA, members will fall into one of two categories. The first, a broad exemption, covers locations under 3,500 square feet and those with operator-owned jukeboxes and one TV and/or radio like those found in the common home. Requirements for locations over 3,500 square feet to qualify for the exemption include: no more than six external speakers with no more than four in any one room; no more than three TVs with no more than two in any one room with no screen size larger than 55 inches; no charge or fee for transmission; and transmission limited to the gross square footage of the establishment. The exemption license will cost $30 annually.

For locations that do not qualify for the exemption, a fee structure has been put together based on the square footage of a location. Locations under 1,500 square feet will pay $455 a year. At the other end of the spectrum, locations larger than 30,000 square feet will pay $16,879 annually.

NLBA has been in negotiations with the performing rights organizations for over a year, and several members of the Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) criticized AMOA for not voicing stronger opposition to an initial proposal last spring. AMOA staffers argued that the agreement was good for operators' location customers, but critical operators countered that on-premise location-owned music constituted competition to their jukeboxes.

However, some industry members have also suggested that the recent agreement will provide a productive model for renegotiating a comprehensive jukebox license with the performing rights organizations at the end of this decade.

Sega releases *House of the Dead* video

Sega GameWorks' highly anticipated new game, *The House of the Dead,* was scheduled for release late last month, the company reported. The two-gun shooting thriller combines razor-sharp action with a spine-chilling storyline. It will be available in deluxe and standard configurations.

The game centers around a group of research scientists trapped inside a mysterious mansion and held under attack by creatures from the dead. As top special agents, players must infiltrate the house, rescue the scientists, and unravel clues to solve the evil plot that is at the core of the story.

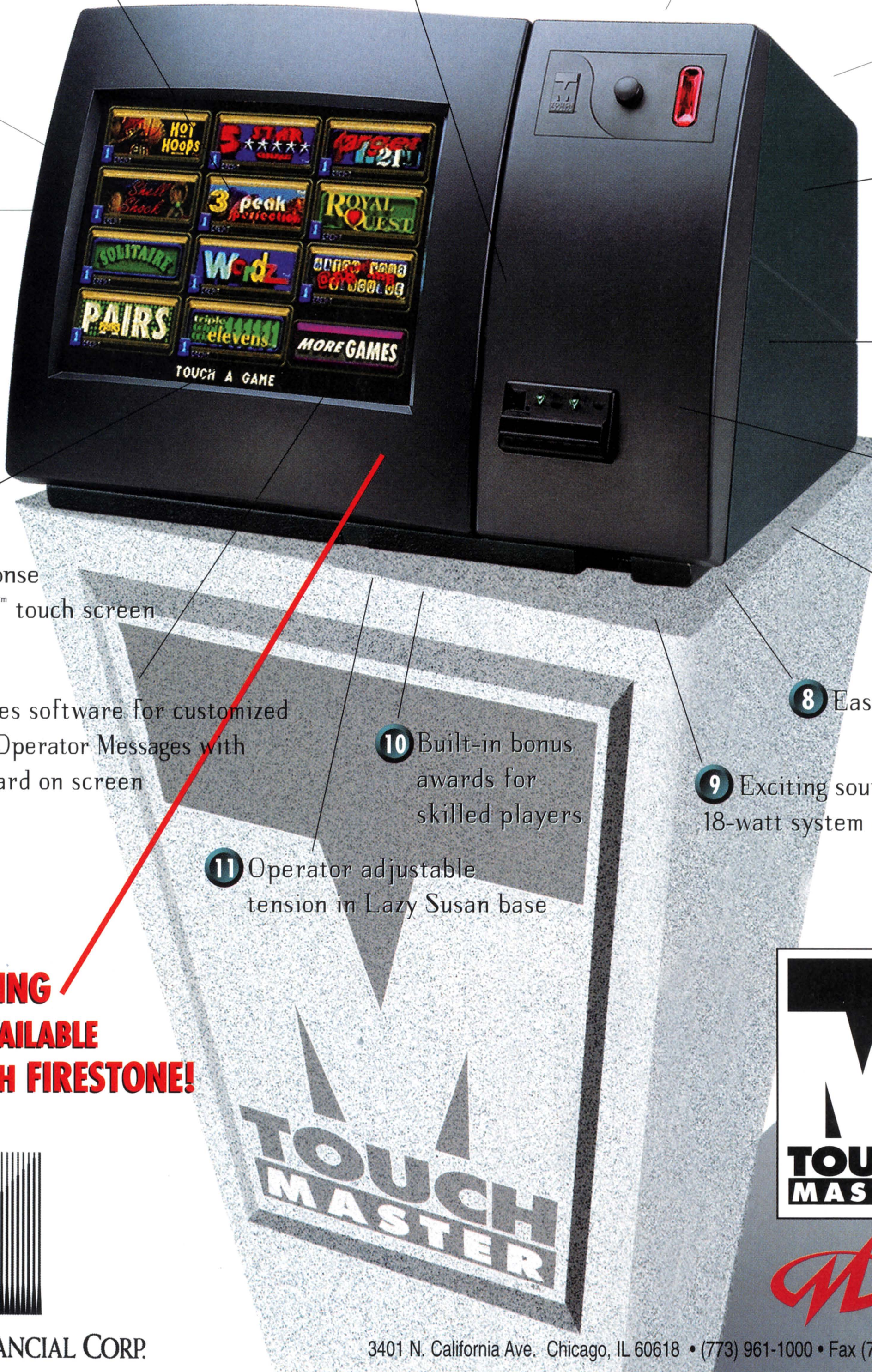
Battling through rooms and action sequences, the player confronts a ghastly assortment of enemies, angry ghouls, ferocious flying beasts, and reptiles from beyond. However, the player cannot just kill the enemies because they are already dead. They must be blown apart, bit by bit.

The game features a storyline that changes based on the player's decisions, creating a new experience each time. "Because *The House of the Dead* has an interactive storyline, players feel more in control of the on-screen action," said Al Stone, president of Sega Game Sales. "They can use their judgment and make decisions that affect the entire outcome of the game. This feature greatly encourages repeat play."

Artificial intelligence technology incorporated into the game allows enemy reactions to correlate with a player's expertise. As the player gets more accurate, enemies attack quicker with more accuracy and intensity. Another added feature is the option to change the color of enemy blood from red to green, allowing operators to control the amount of graphic violence in the game.

"The operators that have tested *The House of the Dead* have requested to purchase the game as soon as it is available," added Stone. "After we have gathered more extensive data, we will publish test reports to our distribution network so they can share this information with their customers."

~~21~~ 22 Reasons to get your hands on TouchMaster™



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AMOA exhibit sales outpacing last year

As of mid-May, two thirds of the booth space available for AMOA Intl. Expo '97 had been sold, show organizers reported. The show will be held Oct. 23-25 at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, Ga.

In addition, AMOA has announced the introduction of Developer's Row, an exciting new area of the show floor featuring companies involved in game software development and other new industry technologies and innovations.

Don Hesch

Nearly 500 of the 726 booths currently available for the show have been sold to 127 companies, which is substantially ahead of exhibit sales during the same time last year, according to AMOA. Close to 80 of the booths have been set aside for the Developer's Row. Companies that have already committed to this space include Microsoft, Intel, and GT Interactive.

"Given the changing marketplace, we are expanding the focus and marketing of the show on all fronts," said Don Hesch of A.H. Entertainers in Rolling Meadows, Ill., and chairman of the show planning committee. "Our trade show division and others are aggressively selling to expanded market segments including companies involved in high technology as well as niche vending-related segments such as bulk and phone card vending."

The trade show is expected to attract 7,500 industry professionals from a diverse cross section of positions, and AMOA's trade show marketing staff is being aided in exhibit sales by the staff of Leisurexpo, a winter customer-based trade show that targets the location-based entertainment center market. For more information, contact Dave Burnell, (800)937-2667.

A tasty issue

Perky's pizza

Food service, such as the Perky's Pizza counter located at Laser Storm's FEC location in Thornton, Colo., is just one of the topics addressed in this month's special section on Family Fun beginning on pp. 52. Other subjects covered include small and large FECs, hot plush items, marketing laser tag, managing teenage employees, and insurance coverage.

Washington D.C. update

AMOA's government relations committee reports in its most recent News Flash that serious efforts are underway in both the U.S. House and Senate to increase the federal cigarette tax from 24 to 67 cents.

The proposal is reportedly part of a children's health care coverage bill introduced in the Senate by Sens. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) and Edward Kennedy (D-Ma.), which would expand government health insurance to children now ineligible for coverage. The tobacco tax would serve as the funding for the program.

Senate majority leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.) has expressed opposition to the bill, although a similar one is on its way to introduction in the House of Representatives.

Also being reported by AMOA's News Flash are the appointments of members to the federal commission to study gaming by Congress. While reports indicate that President Clinton will use two, if not all three, of his appointments on pro-gambling members, he has yet to make them official.

The Congressional appointments include Paul Moore, a Mississippi radiologist considered to be neutral and James Dobson, president of Focus on the Family (both by Lott); Leo McCarthy, the former Lt. Gov. of California who is seen as neutral (by Senate minority leader Tom Daschle); Terrence Lanni, chairman of MGM Grand Casino, and Kay James, dean of government at Pat Robertson-founded Regent University (both by House Speaker Newt Gingrich); and John Wilhelm, secretary/treasurer of the International Culinary Union considered pro-gaming (by House minority leader Dick Gephardt).

Second pizza show planned

Due to the success of its Pizza Expo, *Pizza Today* magazine is planning an additional show for next year, the Regional Northeast Pizza Show, Oct. 7-8, 1998, at the Valley Forge Convention Center near Philadelphia, Pa.

According to *Pizza Today*, over 21 percent of the pizzerias in the United States are located in the mid-Atlantic states, including New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania. Another 21 percent are located in the East North Central region, which includes Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio. For more information, contact Sheila Burski, (320)393-3444; fax (320)393-3450.

IAFEC council completes new coin-op games manual

The Games and Redemption Council of the Intl. Association of Family Entertainment Centers (IAFEC) has recently completed a new Games and Redemption Manual. The project was led by council chairman Frank Seninsky of Alpha Omega Amusements.

Others who contributed to the project include Art Warner of Coin Concepts, Jerry Monday of JMC Consulting, Lou Cappetta of ARMS Intl., attorney Tom Fricke who writes "The Legal Eagle" column for Play Meter, and Karyn Gitler of Show Biz Pizza.

The manual is intended to help operators gain an understanding of how to operate games successfully and provide as much up-to-date information about redemption as possible. While the emphasis is on redemption equipment, the manual discusses operation of all coin-op equipment, merchandise, and controls.

"Coin-operated games can account for 30 to 40 percent of an FEC's total revenues," writes Seninsky in his introduction. "Redemption games can make up 70 percent of this game revenue. Redemption is, therefore, one of the most, if not the most, important component to work and excel at."

The council's mandate in a nutshell was: "To provide expertise in key elements of FECs in order to develop or maintain information and programs that serve managers who already have a level of experience in games and arcade management. To include redemption, merchandise, video games, simulators, kiddie rides, virtual reality, and coin-op games."

Sections of the 85-page book touch on a wide range of topics, including: frequently asked questions and answers, a glossary of terms and concepts, recommended payout, myths about redemption, system controls, layout and design, management, meter readings, adult appeal, legal aspects, and the economics of joining forces with a coin machine operator.

For more information, contact IAFEC, 242 Central Ave., White Plains, NY 10606; (914)993-9297; fax (914)993-9219. The report costs $35 for IAFEC members, $55 for non-members.

Spotlight Awards announced at computer game conference

While some of the focus at the Computer Game Developers Conference was on the potential the coin-op market holds for developers, the conference and Computer Game Developers Association also honored creative and technical contributions to the field of interactive entertainment with the prestigious Spotlight Awards.

"The Spotlight Awards reflect our organizations' long tradition of honoring the best game developers in the world," said Ko Ann Vikoren, CGDC director. "Our goal with the awards is to continue to develop new ways to distinguish and promote the artistic expertise and the technical advances that go into today's interactive entertainment."

A nominating committee made up of editors and writers for consumer game magazines as well as industry leaders put forth the slate of contenders, and the membership of the association as well as show attendees voted on the nominations. Here's a look at the awards:

Prerendered art: Zork Nemesis
Animation: Tomb Raider
Adaptation of linear media: I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream
Script, story, or interactive writing: You Don't Know Jack XL
Use of video: Wing Commander IV
Sound effect: Quake
Use of innovative technology: Super Mario 64
Console game: Super Mario 64
Simulation game: Mechwarrior II: Mercenaries
Music or soundtrack: Quake
Strategy/war game: C & C Red Alert
PC/Mac game: Civilization II
Arcade game: *Virtua Fighter 3*
Educational game: Freddi Fish II
Action game: Duke Nukem 3D
Sports game: NHL Hockey '97
Adventure game/RPG: Elder Scrolls: Daggerfall
New Technology: N64 from Nintendo
Trivia or puzzle game: You Don't Know Jack XL
Online/Internet game: Quake
Best Game of 1996: Super Mario 64

Amusement Expo set for third straight year

The third annual Amusement Industry Expo is scheduled at the International Exposition (I-X) Center in Cleveland, Ohio, Oct. 28-30. Presented by AIMS Intl. and supported by a number of other trade organizations, the show highlights goods and services specific to the outdoor amusement industry.

AIE is a comprehensive marketplace for the outdoor amusement industry, featuring exhibitors from all areas of the amusement business. Attractions on display include: rides, concessions, trailers, bunk houses, fun houses, midway and arcade games, lighting and electrical, canvas and tents, plush and novelties, and food and beverage preparation.

"Our attendee database indicates that not only are carnivals, concessionaires, and game operators benefitting from the show, but a lot of small and medium size parks are also attending and benefitting from the show," said show director Eric German. "Many small and medium size parks buy portable equipment because it offers them flexibility in location from year to year and can also be sold or traded-in easier."

In addition to exhibits, the show will also offer an expanded seminar schedule, which will take place on the show floor in a special setting that will allow participants to interact and share with each other their experience and knowledge. Subjects will cover everything from effective game trailer layout to the profitability of pizza. Daily workshops will also cover ride maintenance and safety. For more information, contact AIMS Intl., (216)265-2657 or (800)897-3942.

In other AIMS Intl. news, the organization is holding what it calls an online trade show featuring Web sites representing member companies as well as a clearing house for buyers and sellers of amusement equipment.

For example, the month of April saw Oriental Trading Co. top the list of most visited sites, while questions from online attendees ranged from interest in purchasing a roller coaster to a job posting seeking an engineering director. For more info, check out the Web site (http://aimsintl.org).

IAAPA exhibitors gear up for fall trade show

Orlando, already known as the International City of Magic, and the Orange County Convention Center will house the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions '97 Global Showcase of Fun: Exhibits, Attractions & Magic On Display.

Maintaining its tradition of excellence, the new IAAPA trade show promises more than 23,000 qualified buyers from 80 different countries, who will be there to view approximately 1,000 company exhibits during nearly 30 hours of floor time over four days, Nov. 19-22.

According to a buyer's profile published by IAAPA, close to 60 percent of attendees have the final say on the purchase of new equipment. More than 25 percent of the attendees were new to the show last year, and more than 20 percent of them claimed a new products budget between $150,000 and $1 million for this year.

This year's IAAPA will feature a high-tech area larger than previous shows, and several firms have also expressed interest in a rides area on the show floor.

A space allocation meeting was held late last month following the deadline for exhibitors to register.

Web site devoted to jukeboxes posted

Operators looking for a thorough treatment of the jukebox business now have a single stop on the World Wide Web (http://www.jukeboxind.com) to bookmark for updated information on everything from manufacturers to one-stops to currency and coin devices and sound equipment.

Also featured on the site are distributors, industry trade publications, classifieds, repair centers, parts suppliers, auctions, and security devices. Visitors to the site will be able to e-mail questions and problems and ask for technical advice.

For as little as $25 a month, related companies can maintain a permanent presence on the Internet that will allow them to potentially find new customers, sell more product, and create new relationships.

Other possibilities include options such as cross marketing with other companies through online advertising and e-mailing new products, special bulletins, and other important and timely updates.

The staff at Laser L.A. has experience creating Web sites daily, and is fully versed in HTML, JAVA, PERL, CGI, and graphic design. They can even arrange to have e-mail faxed to companies that maintain a presence on their server site. For more information, contact Laser L.A., 12891 Western Ave. D, Garden Grove, CA 92841; (714)895-3200; fax (714)897-5811; e-mail (sales@jukeboxind.com); Web site (http://www.juke boxind.com).

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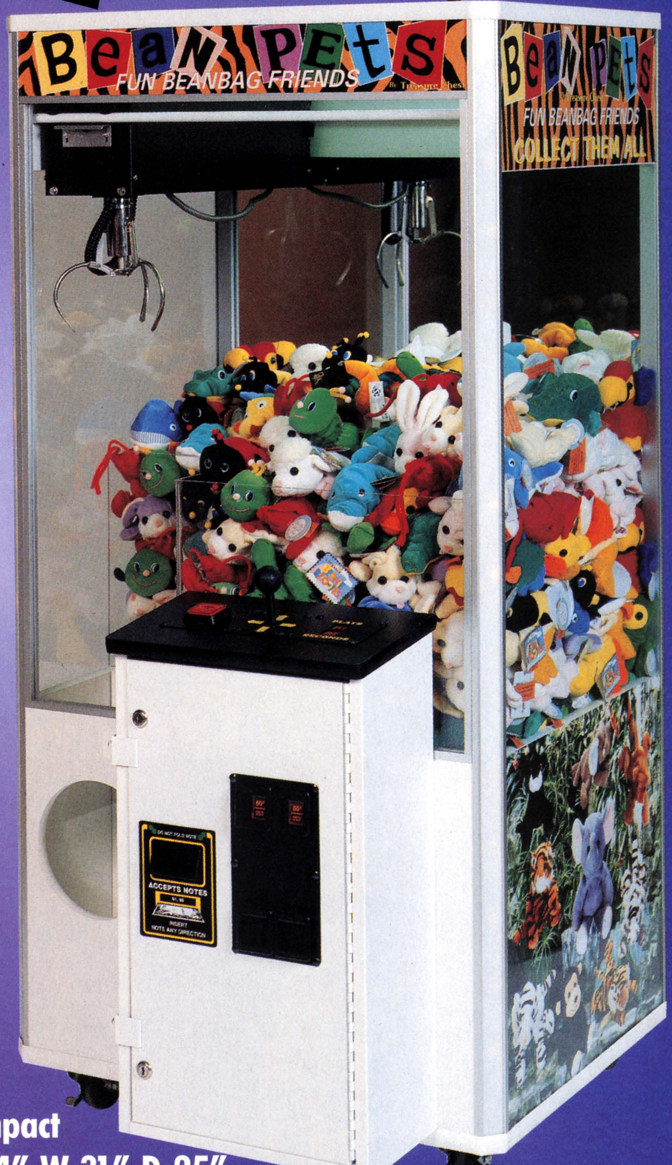
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Mars Electronics opens new office in Las Vegas

Mars Electronics Intl., which is based in West Chester, Pa., has opened a western region gaming and amusement office in Las Vegas. Headed by Jim Brendel and Darren White, the office provides customer service, sales, and support to the expanded gaming industry.

"The Mars ZT 1000 modular design bill validator has had such significant impact on the casinos trialing the product," said Neale Wade, group systems manager. "It has been received so well that we have brought forward our plans to open a Las Vegas office, specifically to better serve our gaming industry customers."

The office is located at 500 North Rainbow Blvd., Suite 300, Las Vegas, NV 89107; (702)221-2040; fax (702)310-4425.

Equipment Catalog corrections

Please note the following corrections in product descriptions from our 1997 Equipment Catalog in May:

▼ Seidel Amusement Machine Co. no longer offers the hit-the- jackpot display with the ability to link games for combined jackpots, as shown on the *Apple Jack* game (pg. 104) in the Ball Roll Down category.

▼ Benchmark Entertainment's *Big Haul* game (pg. 133) in the Coin Drop category cited "an electronic marquee available for two games set side by side," while in actuality that feature comes with the game and is not an option.

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Nightclub & Bar debuts beverage retailers expo

Summertime means a rise in the temperature as well as revenues for bar owners and operators, and the Nightclub & Bar Expo, scheduled for Aug. 18-20 at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando will mark the largest gathering of representatives from that industry. This year will also mark the debut of the first National Beer, Wine & Spirits Beverage Retailer Expo.

This new event will target the off-premise market. "The off-premise retail market has long needed a national show of this caliber," said show organizer Ed Meek. "We believe the union between the on- and off-premise markets will allow a dynamic exchange of ideas. Suppliers to both industries have already show tremendous enthusiasm for this event."

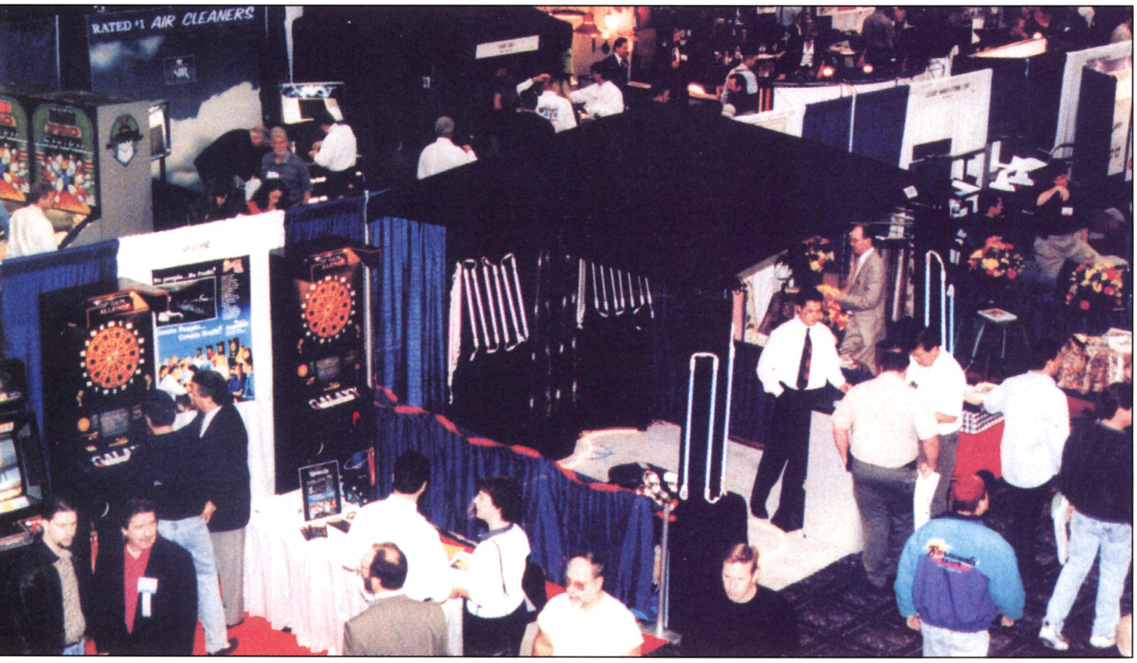
Meek went on to say the show expects to take up more than 600 booths in the exhibit hall and play host to nearly 10,000 attendees from the United States and abroad. A combined schedule will offer 45 seminars for the Nightclub & Bar Expo and the Beverage Retailer event.

On-premise topics include supplier promotions, design, new lighting and sound equipment, DJ-related information, controlling pour costs, profiting from coin-op equipment, and much more. Several seminars will also provide information on using the Internet and other emerging technologies.

Off-premise seminars will touch on new packaging, new products, promotions, security, upselling, legal issues, marketing, emerging technologies, and food and cigar sales. A number of sessions will also deal with the industry's most pressing problems including insurance, liquor liability risks, and political developments.

Major exhibitors at the show will include: the American Amusement Machine Association, Anheuser-Busch, Bacardi-Martini, Jim Beam Brands, Seagram, Brown-Forman, Schiefflin & Somerset, Labatt U.S.A., ESPN, Turner Broadcasting, Fox, Tropical Illusions, Moyer Diebel, Berg, Tracoman, and Martin.

Special events on the schedule include: the National Bartenders' Beach Ball, the National Association of Beverage Retailers' Wines of the World tasting, the International DJ Spin-Off, Jim Beam's Cigar Social, and numerous other parties and mixers. For more information, contact Kevin Seddon, (800)247-3881 or (601)236-5510.



This summer's Nightclub & Bar show will debut the first National Beer, Wine & Spirits Beverage Retailer Expo, targetting the off-premise market.

Starlight Foundation honors Kaminkow

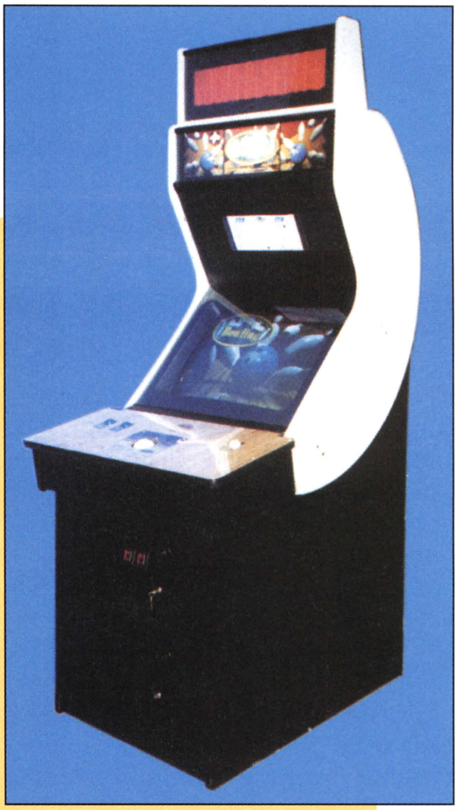
Joe Kaminkow

The Starlight Foundation of Chicago will present its Founder's Award to Joe Kaminkow, executive vice president of Sega Pinball, and his wife Kim. The award will be presented in conjunction with its annual June Gala this month.

Best known for its wish granting programs and extensive support to area hospitals and pediatric care facilities, the Starlight Foundation provides educational and entertainment services to chronically and terminally ill children. This support includes the development of pediatric playrooms, the placement of Nintendo Fun Centers and online computer learning centers, monthly entertainment programs, holiday parties, and toy distribution.

The Kaminkows originally became involved with Starlight as wish grantors, volunteers who facilitate the special requests of seriously ill children. Over the past six years, their commitment has dramatically expanded to include major fund-raising efforts including silent auction items and cash donations.

National IT bowling tournament underway



Incredible Technologies' *World Class Bowling*

Incredible Technologies launched the first national networked tournament on its *World Class Bowling* video game last month. The event, which utilizes the company's International Tournament System to link games from across the country to a central computer, got underway May 16.

Since early in 1996 the company has been holding regional and national tournaments on its *Peter Jacobsen's Golden Tee 3-D Golf* game, and local tournaments on *World Class Bowling* began earlier this year. Players who participate in the tournaments compete for cash and prizes on a national, regional, and location level.

Games can be connected to the tournament system using an existing phone line, and the tournament system handles competition scores and prizes. Each dedicated unit comes complete with a modem, phone cable, bill acceptor, and LED message sign.

For more information, contact Incredible Technologies, (847)870-7027; fax (847)870-0120; Web site (http://www.itsgames.com); or Bulldog Amusements, (206)869-6400; fax (206)869-6401.

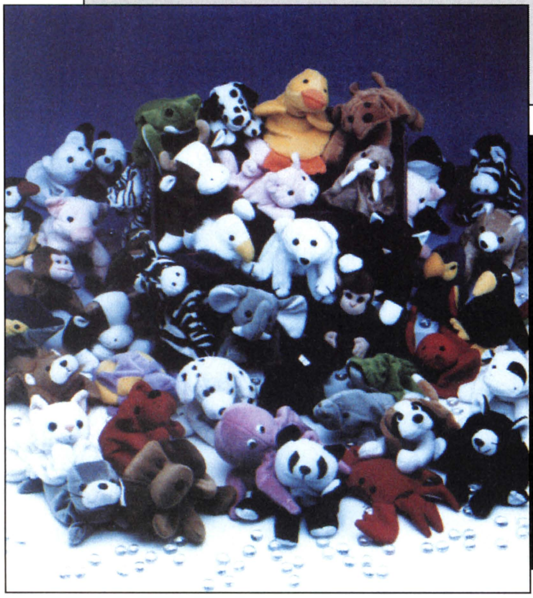
High-definition TV approved by FCC

The Federal Communications Commission has approved the free allotment of digital broadcast channels, paving the way for high-definition television within the next few years.

In an article entitled "A Tube for Tomorrow," *Time* magazine compared the conversion from analog to digital broadcast to that from black and white to color. There will also be room on the new channels for services ranging from paging to Internet access.

While high-definition TV will not immediately outmode current broadcast reception technology, i.e. present-day TVs, the FCC has mandated broadcasters to continue producing analog programming only until 2006. The first high-definition TV sets will reportedly run close to $2,000.

King Plush enters the bean bag fray



King Plush is ready to spill the beans, 100 percent bean bag plush mixes. The company boasts an absolute zoo of bean bag animals, stocking just about any animal imaginable ranging from five to 10 inches.

"We're getting calls daily requesting Bean Bag mixes," said King Plush president Pat Klasno. "I can't keep them in stock long enough to take them home to my granddaughters."

The company is offering a 100 percent money back guarantee on the new plush packs. For further information, contact King Plush, (800)473-3402 or (310)834-0499; fax (310)834-7905; Web site (http://www.kingplush.com).

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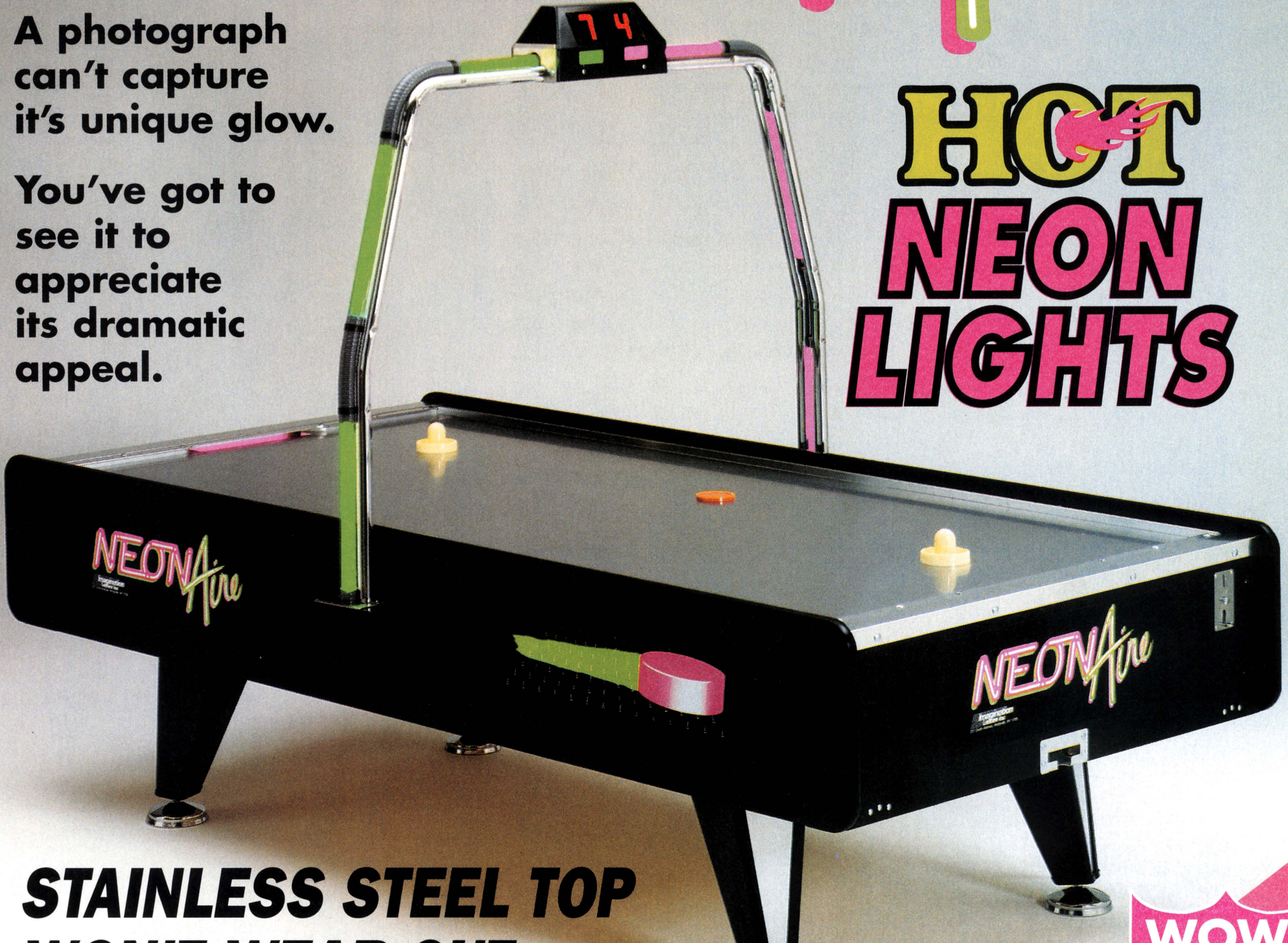

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Have You HEARD?

❖ If you have been looking for **Benchmark Entertainment** on the Web and been unable to find the company's site, try its new address (http://www.benchmarkent.com).

❖ **Thomson Entertainment** has commissioned leading ride maker, Rocket Films, to produce two new computer-generated simulator experiences for release later in the year. One of the titles, Thunder Drive, will provide a high-performance driving experience in a futuristic scenario. The other concept is being finalized.

❖ **The Wisconsin Amusement and Music Operators** Annual Conference and Trade Show will be held June 12-14 at the Holiday Inn SunSpree Resort in Oconomowoc, Wis. In addition to the trade show activity, the association will hold a number of educational sessions, social functions, and membership updates and elections.

❖ The Harris Trust and Savings Bank of Chicago has extended its long-term banking agreement with **Wells-Gardner Electronics Corp.** "This is a third-party endorsement of our future," said Wells-Gardner chairman Anthony Spier. "This agreement provides for a $7 million line of credit, which is ample for our current growth plans."

❖ **Quantum3D** has announced that its Obsidian line of real-time 3-D graphics accelerators has been selected as the visualization subsystem for the FLIGHTLAB Pilot Workstations from Advanced Rotocraft Technology Inc. The Workstation is a real-time high-fidelity solution for helicopter design, analysis, and flight dynamic operational simulation and training that employs PCs rather than UNIX-based graphic workstations or image generators.

❖ **Paradigm Simulation Inc.'s** entertainment division has been created as a separate company, Paradigm Entertainment, that will be headed by Dave Gatchel. Paradigm Entertainment has created Pilot Wings 64 for the Nintendo Co. and is currently working on four new Nintendo 64 and one PC-based title.

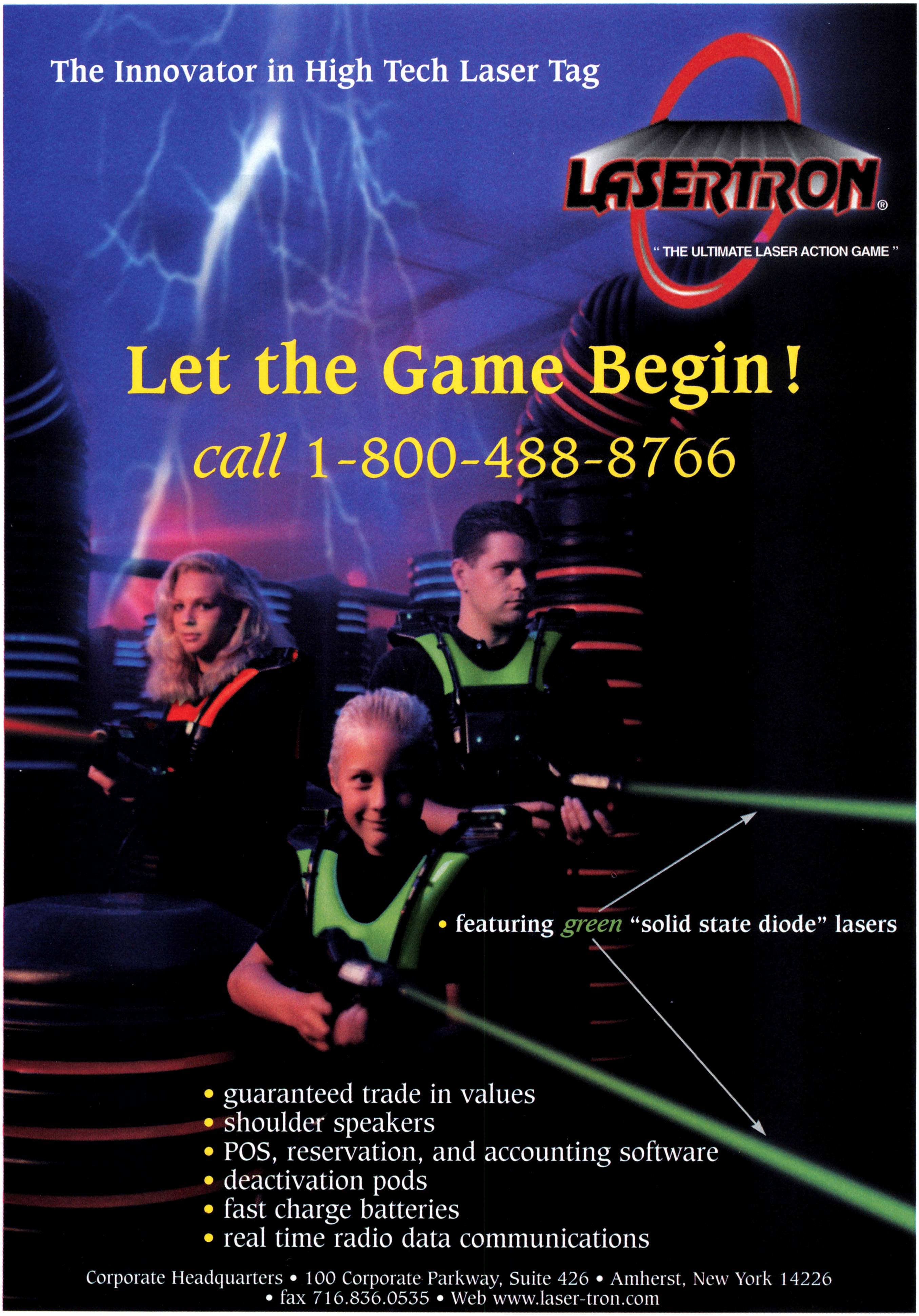
❖ **Spirit Design,** owned by industry veterans Jerry and Sue Monday, was enlisted to help in the development of Border Town Fun and Food, the second such location and currently the largest Taco Bell in the world. Other projects on the burner for Spirit include a 13,000-square-foot FEC and a 40,000-square-foot adult sports bar and themed restaurant.

❖ **The National Council of Legislators from Gaming States** is scheduled to meet June 20-22, in historic Hartford, Conn., to discuss a wide range of gaming-related topics from Internet wagering to gambling cruises to nowhere.

❖ **Betson Enterprises** will host the 8th Annual Tomorrow's Children Fund Lou Avoglia Memoria Golf Tournament at White Beeches Golf and Country Club Sept. 8. For more information, contact Pat Lennon or Jennifer Short, (201)438-1300.

❖ **Smart Industries** can now be accessed on the World Wide Web (http:www.smartind.com). Information on the company's line of products can be found complete with game photos and colorful graphics. "Any feedback will be greatly appreciated," adds Webmaster Guy Tensen.

❖ **GameTech '97,** a new conference on strategic computing for the gaming industry, will be held at Caesers Palace, Las Vegas, Aug. 12-14. The three-day program is designed for information systems managers and other casino executives. *Intl. Gaming & Wagering Business* magazine is sponsoring the event. ▲



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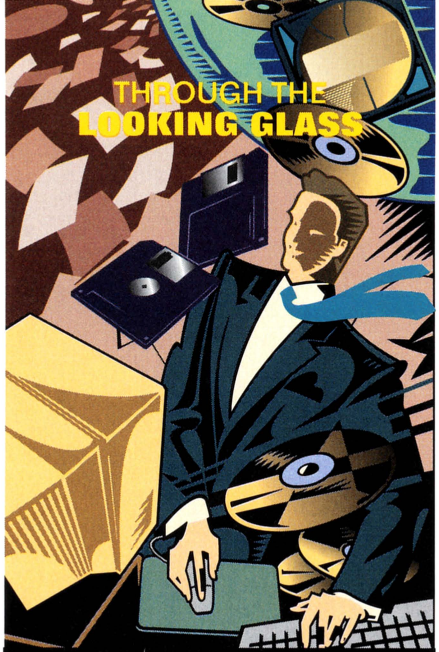


STEVE WHITE

The CGDC: a window to the future of video

The Generation X attendees sporting goatees, ponytails, tatooes, and uniquely pierced body parts may have seemed a world apart from traditional amusement game trade shows, but during the waning days of April the buzz word on many lips at the Computer Game Developer's Conference in Santa Clara, Calif., was coin-op.

Divining why this segment of the industry, which has shunned the arcade market in recent years, is now so intensely interested was no difficult task: software titans Microsoft and Intel are supporting the development of a PC game platform that would open the floodgates for potentially thousands of home game designers to enter the coin-op industry.

In its first public announcement regarding coin-op, Intel introduced a coin-op hardware specification which the company hopes will encourage software vendors and content providers to develop for the PC platform. Intel has been working behind the scenes with Microsoft on plans for entering the coin-op industry since last year.

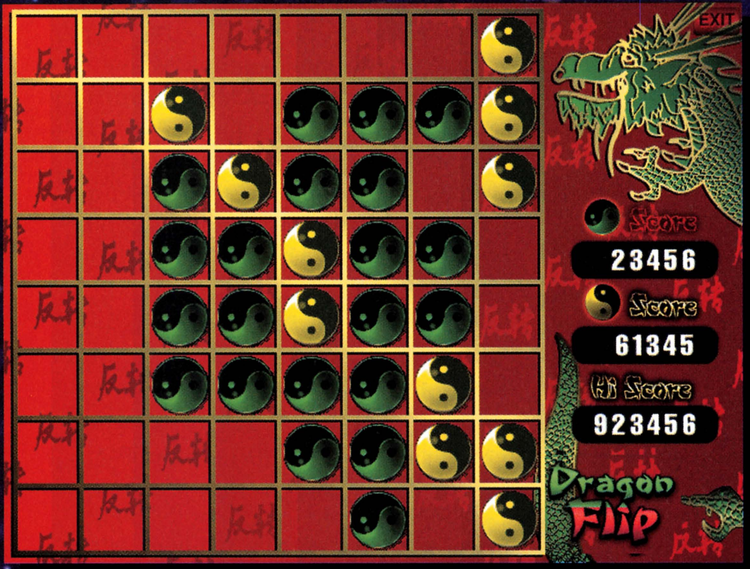
The hardware specification calls for a Pentium II processor (introduced on May 7) with 512 KB cache, a high-performance 3-D graphics accelerator, which is being produced by company's like 3Dfx, and standard arcade quality controllers, an initial line of which has already been designed by Happ Controls. The standard operating system will be Windows 95 this year and Windows NT by 1998. Intel's hardware specification is available for viewing at (http://www.intel.com/drg).

"With the Pentium II processor, MMX (graphics) technology, the accelerated graphics port, and advanced 3-D graphics controllers, the Intel Architecture PC will deliver the 3-D, graphics, and video performance that players expect in an arcade game," said Claude Leglise, vice president of Intel's content group.

The glue that will bind Intel's hardware specification to PC game development and PC game machines was also introduced at CGDC: Microsoft's DirectX including DirectArcade, the interface that will ensure that all game components, both software and hardware, will communicate.

"Developers can write a game with the confidence it will work" on a PC-based arcade machine, said Microsoft's coin-op game evangelist Jason Robar, who along

Downloading to PlayNet Web™ in June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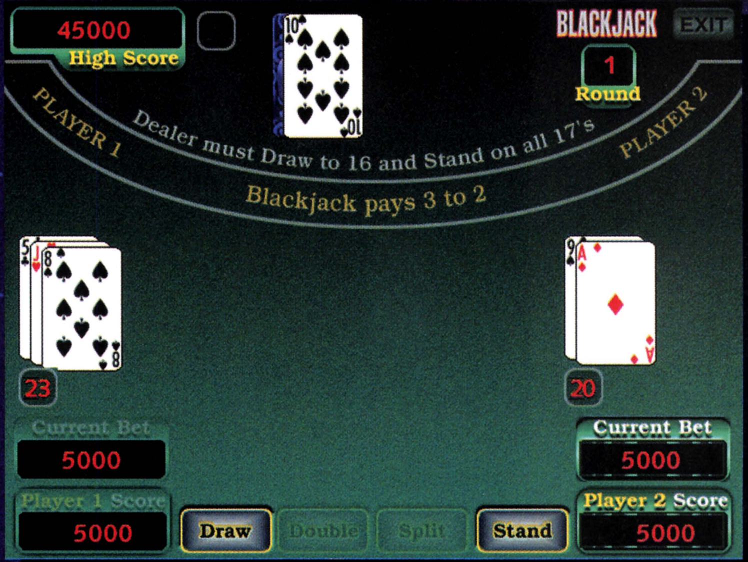
45000
High Score
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PLAYER 2
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Blackjack pays 3 to 2
23
20
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5000
Player 1 Score
5000
Draw
Double
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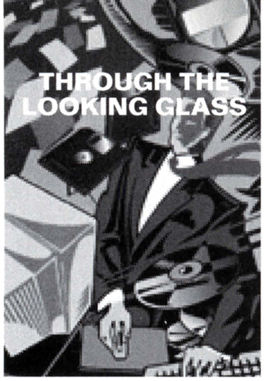


with Intel's director of coin-op marketing development Albert Teng predicted that at least five games will be introduced for the arcade market by the end of the year. Several titles will hopefully be previewed at this summer's E3 show in Atlanta.

"We really want to stress the fact that this is an open system," continued Robar. "A game developer doesn't have to care what 3-D card his game will run. For every type of hardware, we have an abstraction" that will allow it to communicate with software developed with DirectX.

Despite this picture of an endless source of component availability, representatives at Intel and Microsoft predict that two or three vendors in each hardware segment (i.e. PC boards, graphics cards, etc.) will emerge as the primary source for the arcade market.

As part of its initiative, Intel has received a commitment from H. Betti Industries to conduct field tests of the first arcade PC units. "A common PC infrastructure will lower our customers' cost of business by providing reusable hardware for many different games," H. Betti chairman Peter Betti was quoted as saying in an Intel press release. "It should allow us to offer our customers a wider variety of games."

Teng and Robar estimated that a game machine's life will now be extended from 12 to 18 months to as much as four years because operators will be able to simply replace the software content and retain all the hardware. "We've cut down the total cost of ownership through reusable components," said Robar. "It's really up to the developers now to come up with good games."

However, a number of coin-op manufacturers present at the conference expressed skepticism that top-of-the-line PCs will continue to outpace the performance of the installed base of home systems for that long. Operators will have to spend the approximately $5,000 for a state-of-the-art PC system almost as often as they currently buy dedicated games or game boards, they said.

ALL ABOUT CONTENT

Despite enthusiasm for the potential a PC game platform offers the arcade industry, even those most committed concede that good content and good content alone will drive the model into the marketplace.

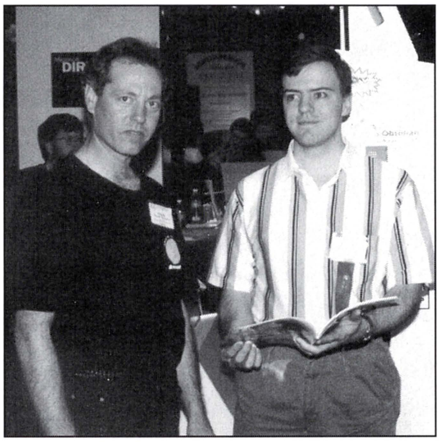
In its booth at the CGDC, Intel and several other companies displayed arcade prototype tiltes from software developers Mango Grits (*Stringer*) and GreyStone (*Canyon Run*), as well as an established arcade title from Interactive Light that uses PC technology and is currently licensed to Innovative Concepts in Entertainment, *Home Run Derby*.

GreyStone president Richard Smith said its *Canyon Run* game, a futuristic air race that will be introduced later this year for the arcade, was originally begun on a different software architecture. However, through working with Intel, Smith said the game was reconfigured and subsequent games will be developed using Intel and Microsoft's technology.

"We needed a software demo that would showcase the performance of Intel's new processor technology," explained Intel's Teng. "GreyStone filled that need by pushing the envelope of real-time 3-D interactive graphics processing."

In its press materials, Intel also indicated that it would be working with a number of other developers including Angel Studios, FASA, Interplay, Sony Development, and UbiSoft.

AMOA's Frank Seninsky (l) talks networking with Steve Benoit of EDS.

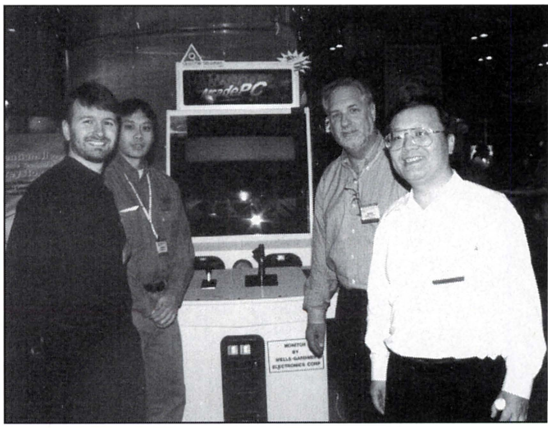


Game publisher GT Interactive, whose titles include Duke Nukem and Blood among other hit PC consumer games, has committed to providing software content for AMOA's National Amusement Network Inc. (NANI), which will also utilize a PC-based model to link game machines over its network being managed by Electronic Data Systems (EDS), in a joint venture with AMOA.

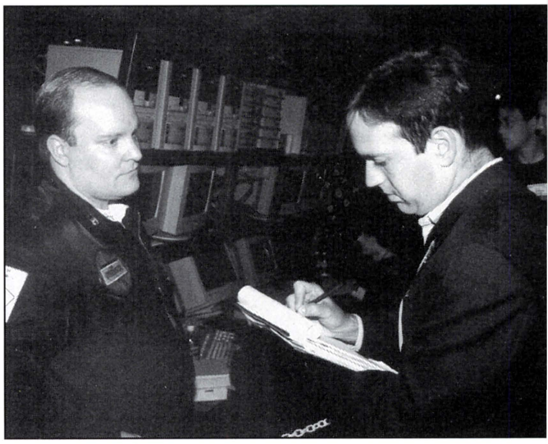
NANI's John Klayh, as well as AMOA's secretary Frank Seninsky, were present at the conference to solicit further interest from game developers interested in providing games for the network.

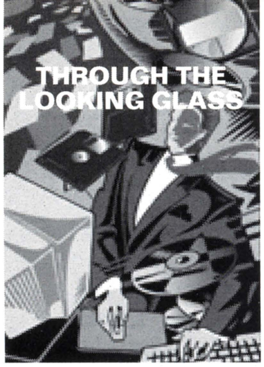
Seninsky said the PC model makes sense for operators from a number of perspectives, including the consumer industries' tradition of soliciting input on games while they are still in development. He envisions a developer's row at AMOA Expo this year where

From left: Jason Robar of Microsoft, Conway Ho of HanaHo Arcade PC, Richard Smith of GreyStone, and Albert Teng of Intel.



Brett Parsons (l) of The Other Side explains his concept to Play Meter's Steve White.





operators can get a look and give advice on titles in development.

Former consumer game developer Tony Hana of HanaHo Arcade PC, a firm working closely with Microsoft and Intel to bring to market a coin-op PC game machine including cabinet, said a number of game developers have expressed enthusiasm at the potential for writing games for state-of-the-art hardware as opposed to the lowest common denominator of home computers.

However, other show attendees said coin-op simply represents a new market for disgruntled developers to exploit as the answer to their prayers. "Coin-op now is just like CD-ROM and online gaming have been in the past few years," said game developer John Bolton of Interna. "Everybody thinks they are going to make millions and everybody will probably lose millions."

One way to ensure the success of PC games in the coin-op marketplace is a way of testing them before full-scale production and sales begin, according to Robert DeKett of the Paragon Group, a company planning to introduce a commercial kiosk utilizing its own PC board that will run beta test versions of games on location. The unit will be called Test Drive, although DeKett said no plans for distribution had been finalized at the show.

"It gets hardware and software in the field and lets software developers know if they have anything viable for coin-op and location based entertainment (LBE)," said DeKett. "This lets guys target certain markets and get real feedback, not bogus marketing feedback. It is also a product for operators. They get free software. It's like going into Blockbuster and listening to the CD before you buy it and later when PC coin-op games come out, there is already a hardware platform that's out there."

MARKET POTENTIAL

While the potential of PC-based games for low-end video seems clear, even to several major coin-op manufacturers at the conference, a number of proponents argue that it is just as advantageous, if not more so, for location-based entertainment or large family entertainment centers.

Sam Sabatino of simulator manufacturer Jessler Enterprises was on hand with a motion seat in 3Dfx's booth to demonstrate the compatibility of PC games with a large entertainment simulator experience. Sabatino said the company is working with PC software developer American Software Corp., as well as Mango Grits, on several simulation games for the arcade and LBE market. The units will be fully unmanned, and Jessler is in the process of seeking distributors.

Another exhibitor, Louis Rosenburg of Immersion, displayed force feedback technology that was demonstrated on games from Sega Soft and Electronic Arts, the second of which was also utilizing a motion platform from Interactive I/O.

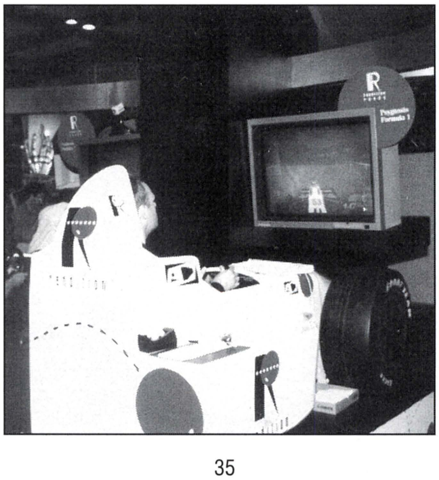
"With the new arcade PC from Intel and Microsoft this becomes a very easy solution that you can plug into the architecture," said Rosenburg. "Developers can go through DirectX (which has an abstraction for Immersion's technology built in) and we work with the hardware vendors to build it into their system."

In addition to the Mango Grits game *Stringer* running on HanaHo Arcade PC's machines and titles from Interactive Light and GreyStone, Intel also showed off its PC Theaters featuring a 10-foot screen with MPEG-2 movies and multiplayer games. Likewise, Microsoft's booth featured the concept of PC-based retail in the form of a miniature version of The Other Side, a Seattle, Wash.,-based location which utilizes current consumer titles in a large simulation configuration and retails computer software and hardware for the home. The firm worked out trailblazing licensing agreements with consumer companies for the commercial use of the games.

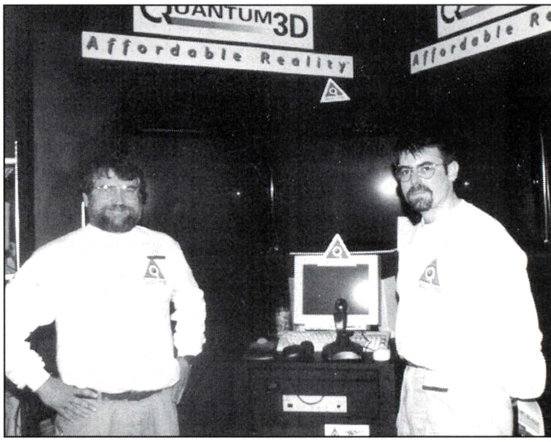
"We don't worry about losing customers to the home," noted The Other Side's Brett Parsons. "This is more fun in the location but you can't do this 10 hours a day. We don't focus on one genre of game. We are looking for high quality and lots of depth so they are commercially viable."

So what does this mean for the LBE and FEC industries striving to offer larger-than-life entertainment experiences? Ross Smith of Quantum3D says it makes developing and buying

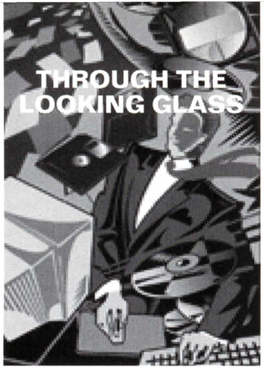
Interactive I/O teamed up with graphics card maker and several game developers to demonstrate a PC-based LBE experience.



Allen Orcutt (l) and Ross Smith of Quantum3D.



Interactive Light's Stuard Wallock with Home Run Hitter in the Intel booth.



these attractions much more affordable. For instance, a wide screen simulation attraction using Quantum3D graphics tools and PC components can be sold for $15,000 when a comparable system on a proprietary system might cost as much as $150,000 to $250,000.

"The cool thing about this PC base is the scaleability and the fact that it's redeployable," explained Smith. "Now the economics of LBE make sense and you still can't get the experience at home."

FUTURE DYNAMICS

Setting the performance aspect of technology aside for a moment, the adoption of a PC-based game platform will also pose a whole new set of business dynamics for operators, distributors, and game and component manufacturers.

By unbundling the components of a game machine and no longer utilizing a product designed, manufactured, and marketed in a vertical line by a single company, industry members will be faced with the task of forging a wide range of new alliances.

An example is the Voodoo Graphics card manufacturer 3Dfx and its affiliate Quantum3D, which sells the Obsidian line of graphics component packages. The company's technology was being displayed in a number of conference booths in several cases in conjunction with HanaHo's Arcade PC machine, Mango Grits' *Stringer* game, and standard interfaces from Happ.

Quantum is also producing a game control interface that "takes a JAMMA harness and lets it talk to a PC," according to Smith. "It's not our core business but it's a necessary evil," he explained.

In addition, companies like HanaHo and NANI are working in conjunction with Microsoft and Intel to court alliances with game publishers and developers to supply content for this hardware configuration through DirectX and Windows.

Beyond that, both operators, machine manufacturers, and software developers will be faced with a wide range of component choices when designing games and developing arcade machines.

While this model contrasts from the traditional chain of coin-op distribution, it is not being ignored by the significant players in this industry. In attendance at CGDS were top coin-op executives from both Namco and Sega GameWorks, as well as representatives from other coin-op video game suppliers.

One fear that has been raised by none other than the father of video games himself, Nolan Bushnell, of PlayNet Technologies, is that a wide open system with many choices is too tempting for unscrupulous business opportunists to pass up.

Microsoft's Robar and Intel's Teng counter that argument by pointing to a continuing role for traditional coin-op distributors, as well as a competitive environment that will demand high quality.

While Robar said that some alternative avenues of distribution may emerge as the market evolved, coin machine operators have already forged a strong relationship with and rely on their distributors for much needed advice and support. Distributors who are willing to accept the challenges of a PC-based platform will continue to receive their support, Robar said. "The distributor has got the edge on anybody else that wants to do this."

At least one major game publisher interested in providing titles for the coin-op market has also expressed the desire to continue to sell through traditional distribution.

From left: 3Dfx's Andy Kane, Kristin Montgomery, and Darleen Kindler.

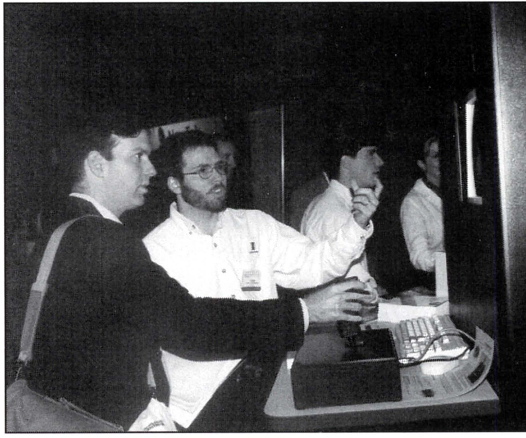
Another issue that arises under the PC model is the possibility of networking games for tournament or other forms of value-added game play. While NANI has already established such a format for AMOA members, other industry players have quietly suggested other avenues, possibly even leveraging Microsoft's own networking abilities.

Unfortunately, only one thing emerges from this picture of seeming chaos and that is the certainty of change, that tangible and metaphorical elixir on which the coin-op industry thrives.

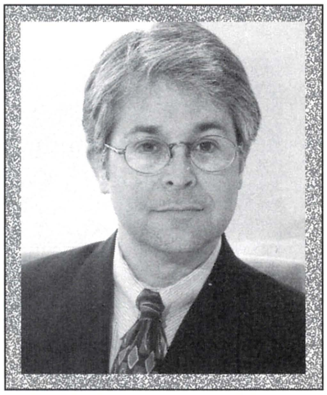
"You now have a delivery vehicle that operators can afford and is reusable, that's the key," concluded Quantum3D's Smith. "I think the coin-op world is going to change and the PC will make that happen." ▲

From left: Robert DeKett, Tom Harlan, and Jody Fast, all of the Paragon Group.

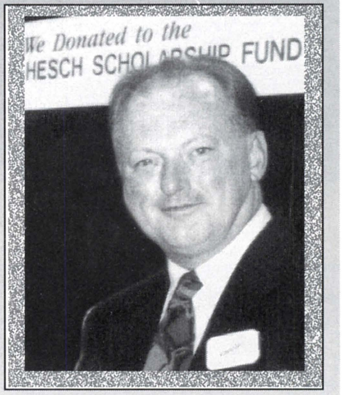
Play Meter's Steve White and Immersion's Louis Rosenburg discuss force feedback technology.



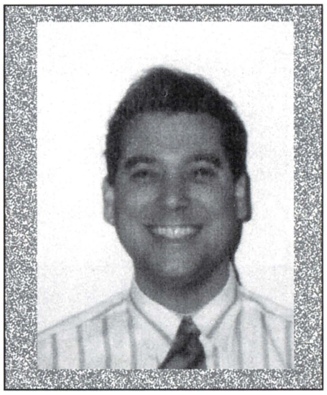
WHO'S NEWS


Seth Foster

Tracy Tate



Bill Ward Jr.


Herb Walsh

SETH FOSTER has been named sales director of Thomson Entertainment which manufacturers the Venturer S2 motion simulator. Foster was formerly vice president of sales for Showscan Entertainment. His career includes a post at Walt Disney Studios and partnership in a company involved in a range of production and development projects in the entertainment business.

TRACY TATE, national sales manager for SNK Corp. of America, has left the company to pursue other business opportunities. SNK thanks Tracy for his many years of devoted service and outstanding work for the company. For the time being all sales orders and questions should be directed to Jeff Yantz, (517)893-2611 or Kristine Bowman, (310)371-7100, ext. 150. Any other inquiries should go to Stacey Sujishi, (310)371-7100 ext. 112.

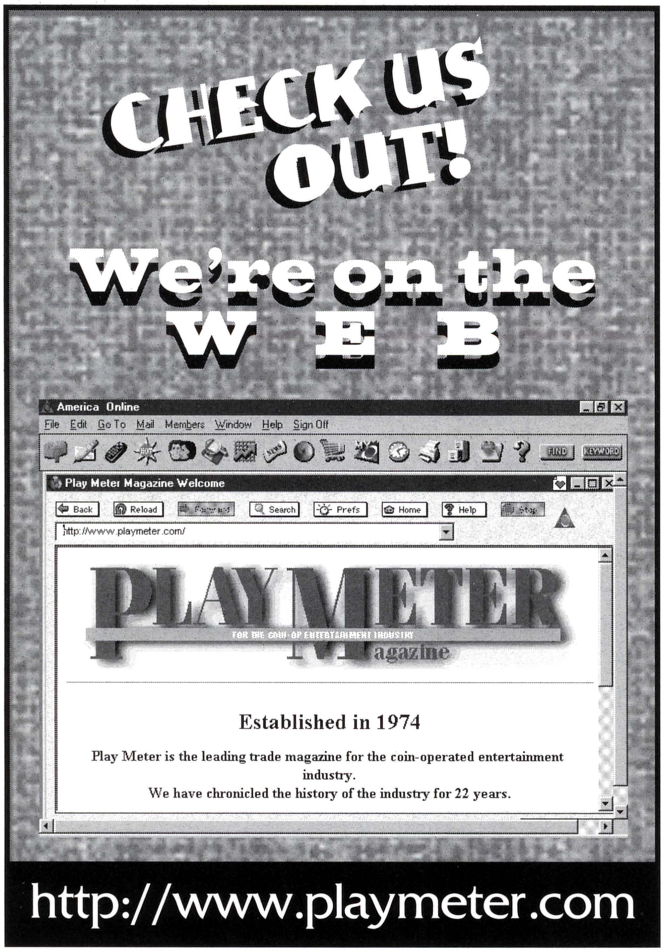
BILL WARD JR. has been named executive vice president of NSM America. He will be responsible for all coin-op products in North, South, and Central America. Ward was formerly the president of dart manufacturer Arachnid Inc.

HERB WALSH has returned to R.H. Belam Co. Inc. to handle amusement sales in the New York metropolitan area. Walsh came up through the ranks at Belam, where he started in the parts department and was later promoted to sales. Walsh left the industry to promote the Internet. His former customers are happy to have him back.

DOUG CORNELSON has been named product manager for amusement park ride manufacturer Sellner Mfg. Co. His wife **TEDDI CORNELSON** has been named customer service coordinator. Doug will be involved in the research and development of new products and evaluating the design and engineering of existing rides on an ongoing basis to ensure maximum performance levels. He was formerly ride superintendent for Ottaway Amusement Co. and also owned and operated rides and games for Cornelson Big Valley Rides. Before taking the Sellner post, Doug was a customer service representative for Chance Rides Inc. Teddi's position is designed to enhance the customer service program and extend after-hours service. ▲

BEYOND THE PLAYFIELD

Century Club announcement: When members of the Century Club gathered during ASI they were saddened to learn of the Feb. 25 passing of club president Jim McNeely Sr., formerly of Southgate Amusement & Vending in San Antonio, Texas. Any industry friends who would like to help the family, especially Jean and Jim's son Jonathan C. McNeely, can send a monetary donation for Social Security No. 451-93-0579 c/o Security National Bank, 100 St. Cloud, San Antonio, TX 78228.



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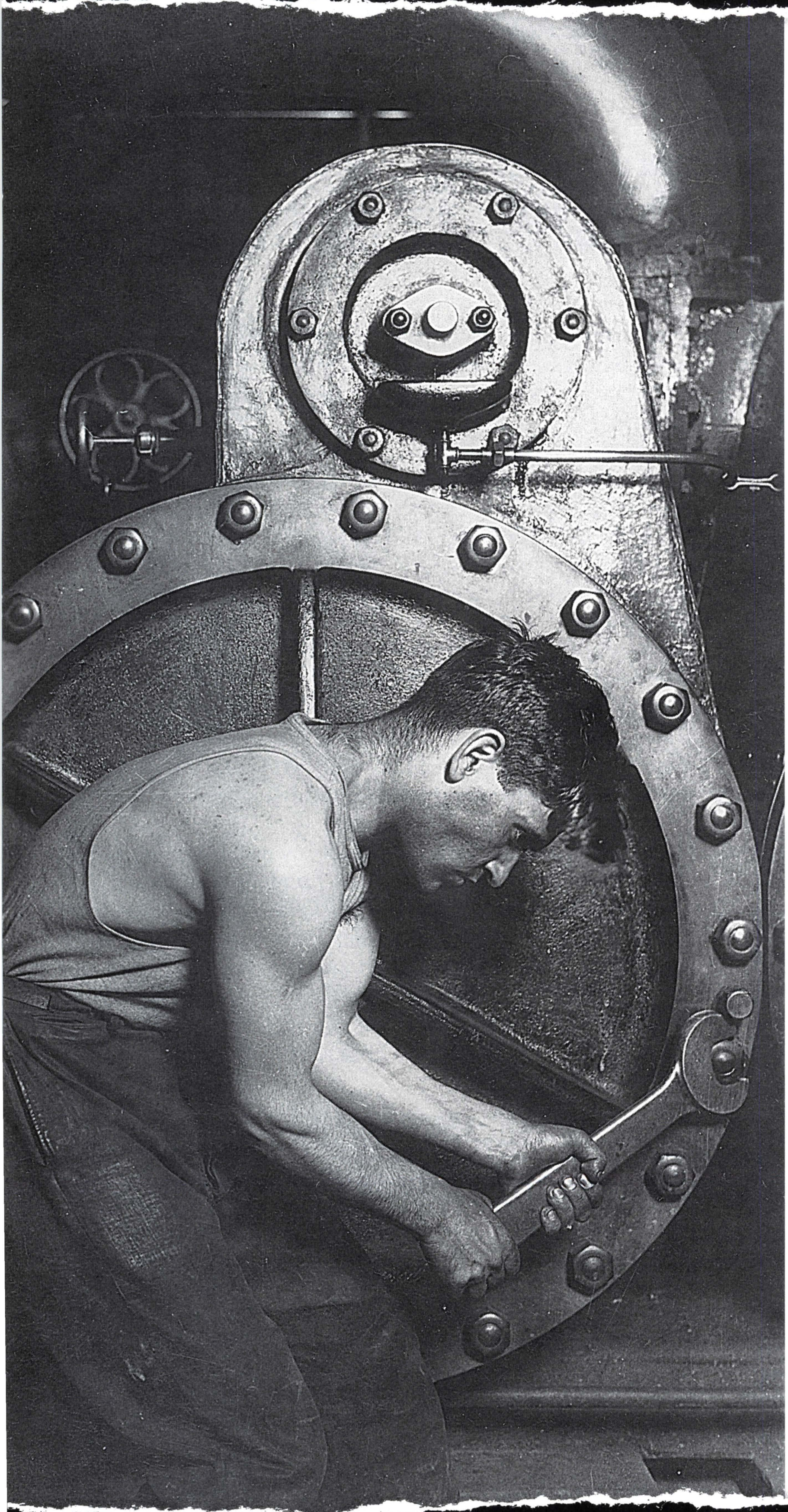
Award winners: Top—A smiling David Sadler (l) and Joel Friedman of Rowe Intl. are proud of their Play Meter Award of Excellence for Outstanding Jukebox which was presented at ASI in the spring. David and Joel are standing by Rowe's latest CD jukebox, the *LaserStar StarLight.* **Bottom**—The Incredible Technologies' crew assembled to accept the AAMA Manufacturer of the Year Award, also presented at ASI. From left: Programmer Brian Smolik, engineer Terry Little, vice president of product development Larry Hodgson, designer Jim Zielinski, president and CEO Elaine Ditton, director of engineering Steve Jaskowiak, executive vice president Richard Ditton, vice president of marketing Scott Morrison, and vice president and legal counsel Michael Hanson. Incredible Technolgies owes much of its success to its *Peter Jacobsen's Golden Tee 3D Golf* video and the International Tournament System that connects dedicated versions of the game to regular phone lines so players can enter and win cash prizes.

TIGHTEN UP YOUR BUSINESS...



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Working on our fourth annual family fun edition has heightened my appreciation for the small businessman, especially the mom and pop locations that started with one or two attractions and gradually built their facilities into a credit to their communities.

Developing a haven for families to interact together in a relaxing atmosphere is no easy accomplishment. It requires dedication and determination, financial commitment, conscientious employees, customer-pleasing activities and surroundings, and a vision for the future. After the doors are flung wide on opening day the hard work has just begun. Staying in tune with your audience and providing them with well maintained attractions while adding and changing the mix takes a lot of solid planning.

One key to the success of the FECs profiled in this issue is controlled growth. Few individuals can start big and get bigger. The wise choice? Measured steps on the road to expansion—when you are ready. Too many entrepreneurs have been lured by observing big weekend crowds, thinking this is an easy business. Far from it. The worst mistakes are to skimp on the proper research before going forward with the project, and to stop improving or adding to the facility once it's underway.

With that said, let me extend thanks to the individually owned centers we've highlighted (in alphabetical order): Camelot Lanes & Sportsplex in Portage, Ind., Fun Quarters in Eldersburg, Md., Hickory Dickory Dock in Hickory, N.C., LaserStorm in Thornton, Colo., MeadowBrook Family Fun Center in Yakima, Wash., and Sluggers & Putters Family Sports Park in Canal Fulton, Ohio. No one can tell the FEC story better than those who have lived it.

In addition, we chronicle the early struggles of the now mega-centers known as Dave & Busters, and highlight the brand-new Sega GameWorks in Seattle, Wash., and Q-City in Mesquite, Texas.

Read all about these entertaining locations. If you're in their vicinity, stop by to see the products of their creative talents and stick-to-it-tiveness.

In addition to the centers that have shared with us either their histories or their insights into FEC operations this time around, we add our unspoken gratitude to the legion of other small and large well-run FECs around the globe for adding to the luster and reputation of the entertainment industry in general. ▲

Bonnie Theard
Managing Editor

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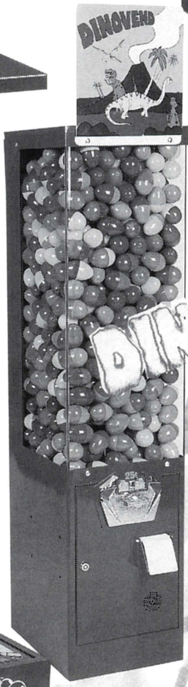
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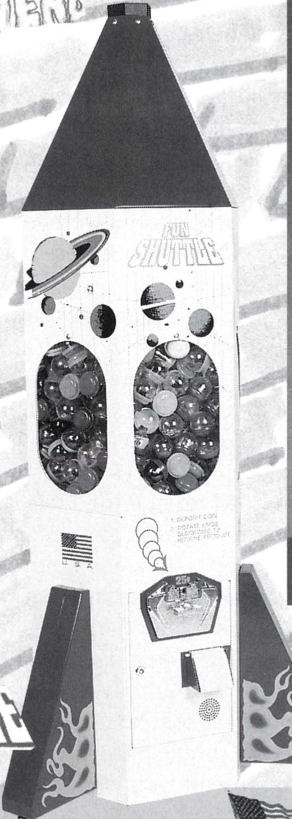
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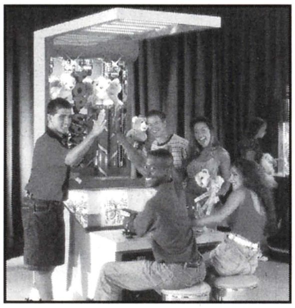

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FROM LEFT FIELD

The press release BLUES

This is going to be one of those personal cries for help, not unlike our tireless managing editor Bonnie Theard writes once or twice a year urging readers to participate in the "Equipment Poll." But, of course, there's no way I could get right into it without first telling a few stories....

I attended the Computer Game Developer's Conference in Santa Clara, Calif., at the very end of April to investigate the potential reservoir of content that would purportedly be available on an open PC platform (for more on that turn to "Through the Looking Glass"), and as part of the media registration process I had to provide my e-mail address, which I did without a second thought.

Within a day, maybe even a few simple hours, my poor e-mail box was being flooded with press releases, requests for appointments, and generally self-congratulatory material concerning a wide range of computer game related products. My computer even complained that the box was too full and admonished me for not compressing some of the files.

This torrent of press information also provided me with hours of enjoyable reading, sifting through releases filled with phrases like "inverse kinetics," "forward dynamics," and "PlastiForm surface engraving," among others. You really do learn something new every day!

But don't take this the wrong way. I'm not really complaining. My choice of journalism as a vocation sealed my fate years ago. Whether I like it or not, it is my job to wade through thousands and thousands of unusable and unintelligible words and phrases in search of that kernel of truth and gem of practical knowledge that my reader seeks just as it is the public relations executive's job to praise without exception his clients and their products. This is all part of the media culture in which we now live.

In fact, this avalanche of preview material, full of the most minute detail, was a welcome surprise from my day-to-day duties, one of which includes overseeing Play Meter's "What's New" section. Invariably, I hear of a game from an operator or some other industry member before the manufacturing company has provided us with photos and a description. One press liaison for a major manufacturer even complained last year that operators were learning about new games from magazines aimed at players or players themselves—before they were informed of its existence by distributors or the trades.

It is ironic, and yet almost universally true, that companies less familiar with our industry (often high-tech firms) are much more current with their new product releases than some of our oldest friends in the industry. While advertising may provide the most high-profile way of informing readers about a new product, it never hurts to prime the pump with a free nod in "What's New."

Strangely enough, as I was swimming through this sea of e-mails (the '90s way to communicate) another odd tale surfaced in the news, one that spelled out in no uncertain terms the need for media savvy and the consequences of a lack thereof.

A former Masters champion and perennial jokester, pro golfer Fuzzy Zoeller, found himself in a maelstrom of controversy after making disparaging, possibly even racist, remarks about the current deity of golf and the darling of the national media. Yep, you got it—Tiger Woods. The media hanging that ensued put Fuzzy on the defensive with the minority community and cost him the endorsement of a line of clubs and sportswear sold by K-Mart despite claims that he was only joking.

He really should have known better. Don't you agree?

So to those of you who are manufacturers, just remember the ol' Fuz and, more importantly, think of me waiting in anticipation for those press releases when it comes time to put out another new game. You can even send me an e-mail (news@playmeter.com). ▲

Steve White
Associate Editor

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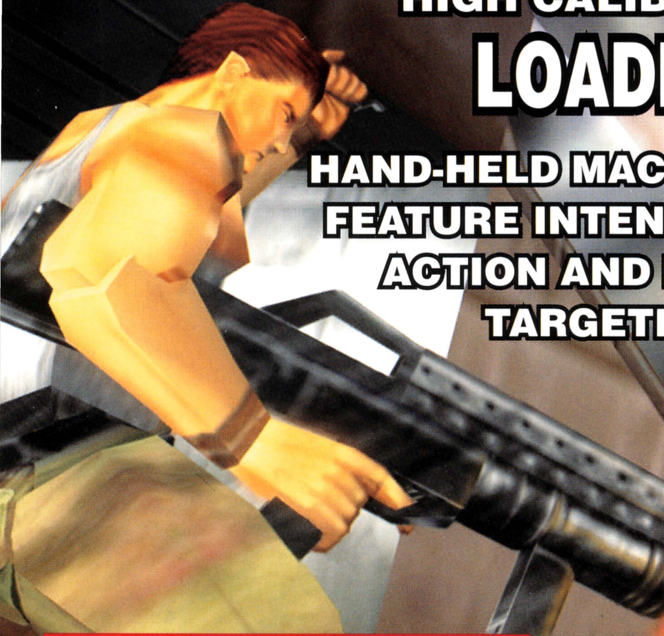

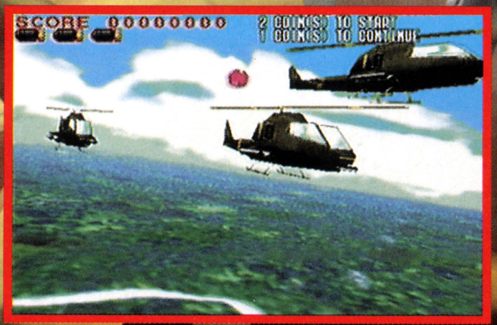
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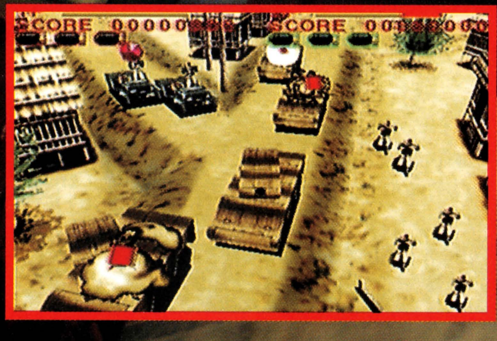
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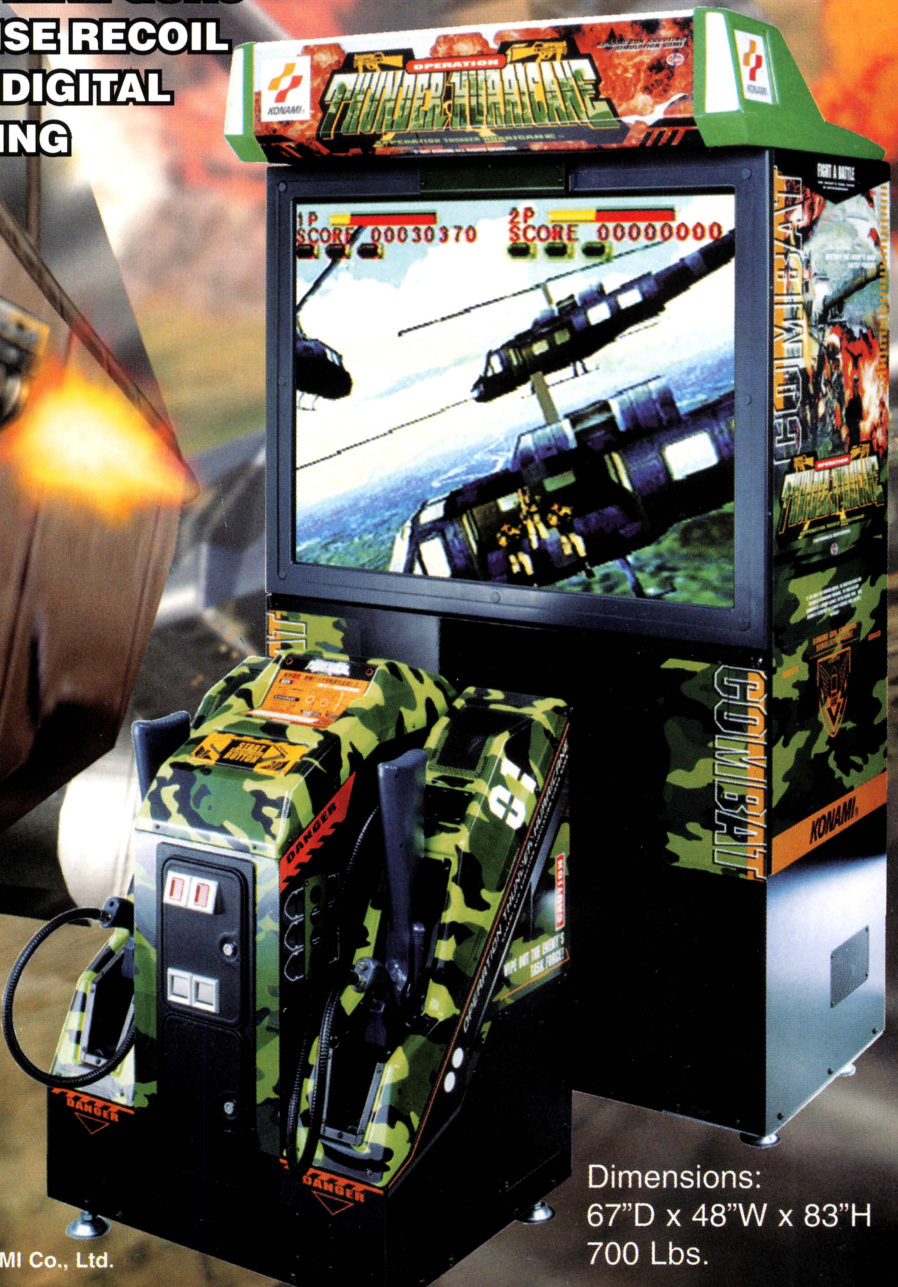
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Dimensions:
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700 Lbs.

Canada revues go-kart safety

A recent issue of The Fun Times newsletter published by Automated Batting Cages and J & J Amusements/Kidzkart reported that the Canadian government is reviewing regulations concerning go-karts and concession track operations. The review comes in the aftermath of a rare 1996 incident in which a go-kart track patron died.

Owners and operators of existing tracks and those now building tracks in Canada were advised to contact local and provincial authorities to check on regulations for specific areas of the country.

Eight major points are being considered in terms of rules and regulations: harness-style four-point shoulder seat belts; seat belts with pelvic support; frame-mounted roll bar; roll bar minimum height; fuel leakage and specific refueling procedures; kart brakes; seat, backrest, and leg areas; and approved safety helmets.

ABC and J & J have always supported strict safety measures and worked with regulators to provide technical data and a history of the industry.

Kenzo Tsujimoto

Tsujimoto becomes chairman of ACCS

Capcom Co. Ltd. president Kenzo Tsujimoto has accepted the office of chairman of the Association of Copyright for Computer Software for a term of one year, which commenced April 1. Tsujimoto is also vice president of both JAMMA and CESA. This is the first time he has taken the top post in a public corporation. The ACCS strives to protect computer software copyrights for all computer software, not only for PCs.

Amusement Park China sets show dates

China is again the focus of a new trade show that aims to provide access to a market of 1.2 billion consumers. Launched by the China Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions, the four-day event is set for Oct. 22-25 at the China World Trade Centre in Beijing, China.

The following amusement sectors will be covered at the show: family fun centers, water parks, theme and amusement parks, entertainment and promotion centers, shopping centers and arcades, property developers and contractors, distributors and importers, transportation, consultants, and the central, provincial and municipal cultural committees.

According to Sarala Govindan of the Reed Exhibition Companies, international exhibitor services, U.S.-based technology leads this industry globally and North American products and services are in demand in China's growing amusement park industry. For more information on the event, call (203)840-5355; fax (203)840-9355; or e mail (sgovindanAreedexpo.com).

INTERNATIONAL CALENDAR

JUNE 6-8
1st Fun Asia, Jakarta Convention Center, Jakarta, Indonesia. Call 62-21-522-2075 or 62-21-522-2077; fax 62-21-522-2076.

JUNE 17-22
AIAPA Expo-Diversiones '97, Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. Call (3)614-3015; fax (3)615-1483.

JUNE 24-26
TILE '97, Palais des Congress, Strasbourg, France. Call +44-1985-846181; fax +44-1985-846163.

AUGUST 27-29
Asian Amusement International Theme Parks & Attractions '97, Singapore, World Trade Centre. Call Tony Chan, (65)222-8550; fax (65)224-6328.

SEPTEMBER 18-21
JAMMA, International Exhibition Centre, Tokyo, Japan. Call +81-3-3438-2363; fax +81-3-5472-7115.

SEPTEMBER 25-29
China Amusement Expo, Beijing Exhibition Centre, Beijing PRC. Call Rebecca Chan, (852)2865-2633; fax (852)2866-1770 or (852)2866-2076.

SEPTEMBER 30-OCTOBER 2
International Leisure Industry Week, NEC, Birmingham, England. Call +44-1932-564455; fax +44-1932-560009.

OCTOBER 1-3
FER-Interazar '97, Parque Ferial, Juan Carlos 1. Madrid, Spain. Call +34-3-416-1466; fax +34-3-415-0095.

OCTOBER 16-19
ENADA '97, Rome Fairgrounds, Rome, Italy. Call (06)440-17-18; fax (06)440-27-18.

OCTOBER 22-25
Amusement Park China '97, China World Trade Center, Beijing, China. Call Reed Exhibition Companies, Export Division, (203)840-5355; fax (203)840-9570.

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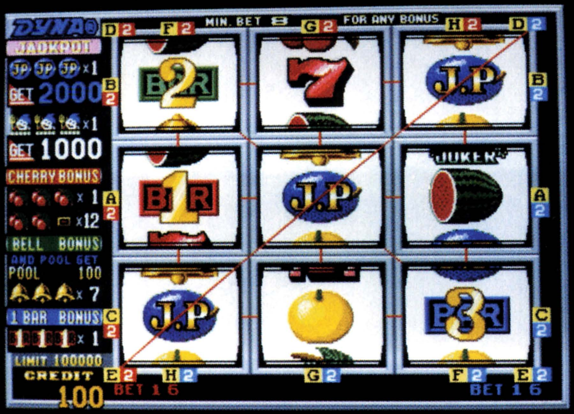
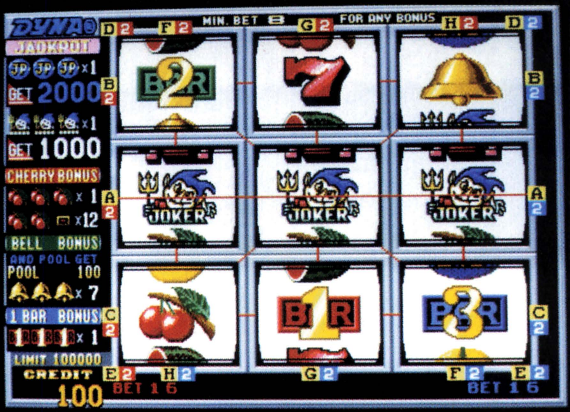


DYNA
MIN. BET 8
FOR ANY BONUS
JACKPOT
GET 2000
GET 1000
CHERRY BONUS
BELL BONUS
AND POOL GET
POOL 100
1 BAR BONUS
LIMIT 100000
CREDIT
100
BET 16
J.P
JOKER

PROGRESSIVE JOKER BONUS



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CHERRY BONUS
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AND POOL GET
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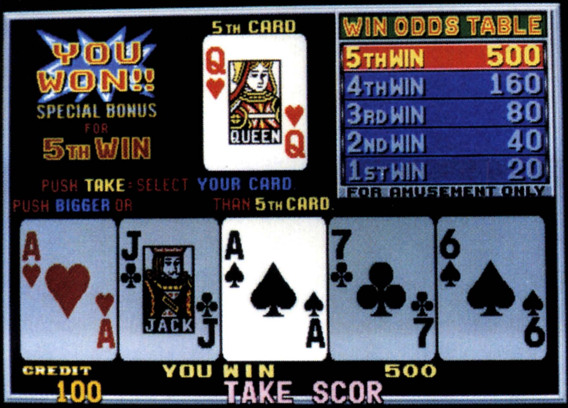
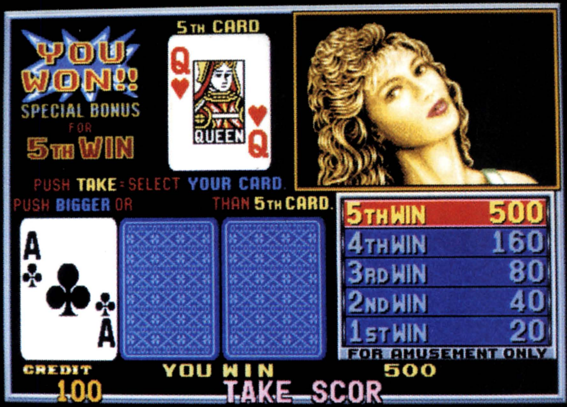
BET 16
JOKER

HI-LO DOUBLE UP- 5 CARDS



YOU WON!!
SPECIAL BONUS FOR 5TH WIN
5TH CARD
WIN ODDS TABLE
5TH WIN 500
4TH WIN 160
3RD WIN 80
2ND WIN 40
1ST WIN 20
FOR AMUSEMENT ONLY
PUSH TAKE SELECT YOUR CARD
PUSH BIGGER OR THAN 5TH CARD.
CREDIT 100
YOU WIN 500
TAKE SCOR

HI-LO DOUBLE UP- 3 CARDS



YOU WON!!
SPECIAL BONUS FOR 5TH WIN
5TH CARD
PUSH TAKE SELECT YOUR CARD.
PUSH BIGGER OR THAN 5TH CARD.
5TH WIN 500
4TH WIN 160
3RD WIN 80
2ND WIN 40
1ST WIN 20
FOR AMUSEMENT ONLY
CREDIT 100
YOU WIN 500
TAKE SCOR

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IT'S NO secret

❒ **Taito Corp.** of Tokyo, Japan, has developed a CG board called Taito Wolf in conjunction with 3Dfx Interactive of San Jose, Calif. Taito Wolf has a processing capacity of one million polygons per second.

❒ **The 5th Annual AIAPA Expo-Diversiones** will welcome visitors to the Guadalajara Convention and Trade Show Center June 17-22 in Mexico. Exhibitors and attendees are invited to take advantage of new business opportunities in the country. Guadalajara is a cosmopolitan city that links the northwest, central, and pacific states of Mexico.

❒ **Sega will open** a large arcade in the rebuilt Kyoto Station Building, which will include a hotel, department store, and specialty shops. The arcade will feature 10 attractions along with amusement games.

❒ **Casino Niagra,** the 13th and largest government-run casino, has opened in Canada 100 yards from the New York state border with 3,000 gaming machines and 123 tables.

❒ **The new two-pound coin** will be launched this November in the United Kingdom. According to Britain's amusement industry association BACTA, it will be welcomed by the amusement industry. Enthusiasm does not run as high for the new 50-pence coin which has a multifaceted shape and is lighter in weight. BACTA has informed the Royal Mint in Cardiff that a five-pound coin is also needed.

❒ **Himeji Central Park** in Japan now has five Namco attractions to add to its roller coaster and other offerings. Two of the attractions are new: the Castle Guardian shooting game and the Shocking Horror museum haunted house.

❒ **A Paraguay factory** was closed down last year for making counterfeit Sega 16-bit home videos has apparently reopened in violation of court orders, according to the Anti-Counterfeiting Advisory Group. The factory of Shie Tong Po was again closed by the Paraguay government. ▲

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EYE ON
ASIA

JEFF **BLAIR** and TONY **YEH**

The nightmare in TAIWAN

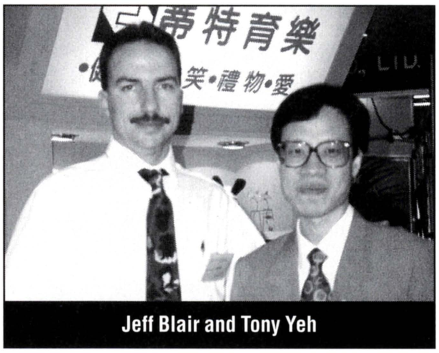
There are many things happening overseas and Jeff Blair and Tony Yeh will regularly keep our readers informed. The first article focuses on the nightmare situation in Taiwan; the government simply does not want any FECs or arcades to operate there. Here's why.

The once gleaming FECs of Taipei City are mostly dark these days, a result of a political crackdown which has all but halted Taiwan's once thriving amusement industry. It's been over a year since Taipei's mayor declared FECs and arcades were in conflict with local gambling laws, rendering them closed and refusing to renew their licenses.

The result now is quiet game rooms, disillusioned operators, and an unhappy playing audience who are not sure what happened to begin with.

What really did happen to the amusement business in Taiwan anyway? It's difficult to pinpoint, but for sure it began when video games (gambling type) became the subject of a huge scandal which brought about a crackdown in their operation by the central government. The already skeptical Taipei mayor, who was not in favor of FECs and arcades to begin with, finally had the perfect opportunity to include them in the video game crackdown. He reasoned that the atmosphere and playing conditions of FECs promoted an environment that wasn't healthy for the teenagers who frequent them.

With so much at stake many Taiwanese coin-op associations have been actively pursuing a solution to this problem, Through legislators, they have been negotiating with the government to devise new laws which would segregate the market and allow FECs to resume operation. The impact was so hard felt, that the AAMA was commissioned to testify to the "amusement" of video and redemption machines. In late 1996, AAMA's assistant secretary Ron Carrara went to Taiwan to meet with local officials to try to loosen the tight restrictions imposed on the arcades. Despite his hard work, no immediate solution was found. Still, Carrara was happy to have made the trip and had this to say of his three-day visit:


Jeff Blair and Tony Yeh

"Many U.S. game manufacturers have a vested interest in Taiwan's situation. This once thriving outlet for America's hottest releases now sits idle with hardly any activity at all! The AAMA believes strongly that the games being produced in the United States are strictly for amusement only and therefore lends its full support to the legitimate operators of Taiwan in resolving this crippling problem."

Much of the hard work did pay off when Taiwan's Department of Economic Affairs issued new regulations for games entering Taiwan. In April of this year, the following major differences were made public:

1) All amusement machines being operated in Taiwan will be separated into two grades—Education (for all ages) and Entertainment (for adults only, prohibiting the admittance of players under 18 years of age).

2) The government will set up an amusement game arbitration committee to decide which games fit into which category. All machines will have to pass the central government classification process and be issued a classification certificate.

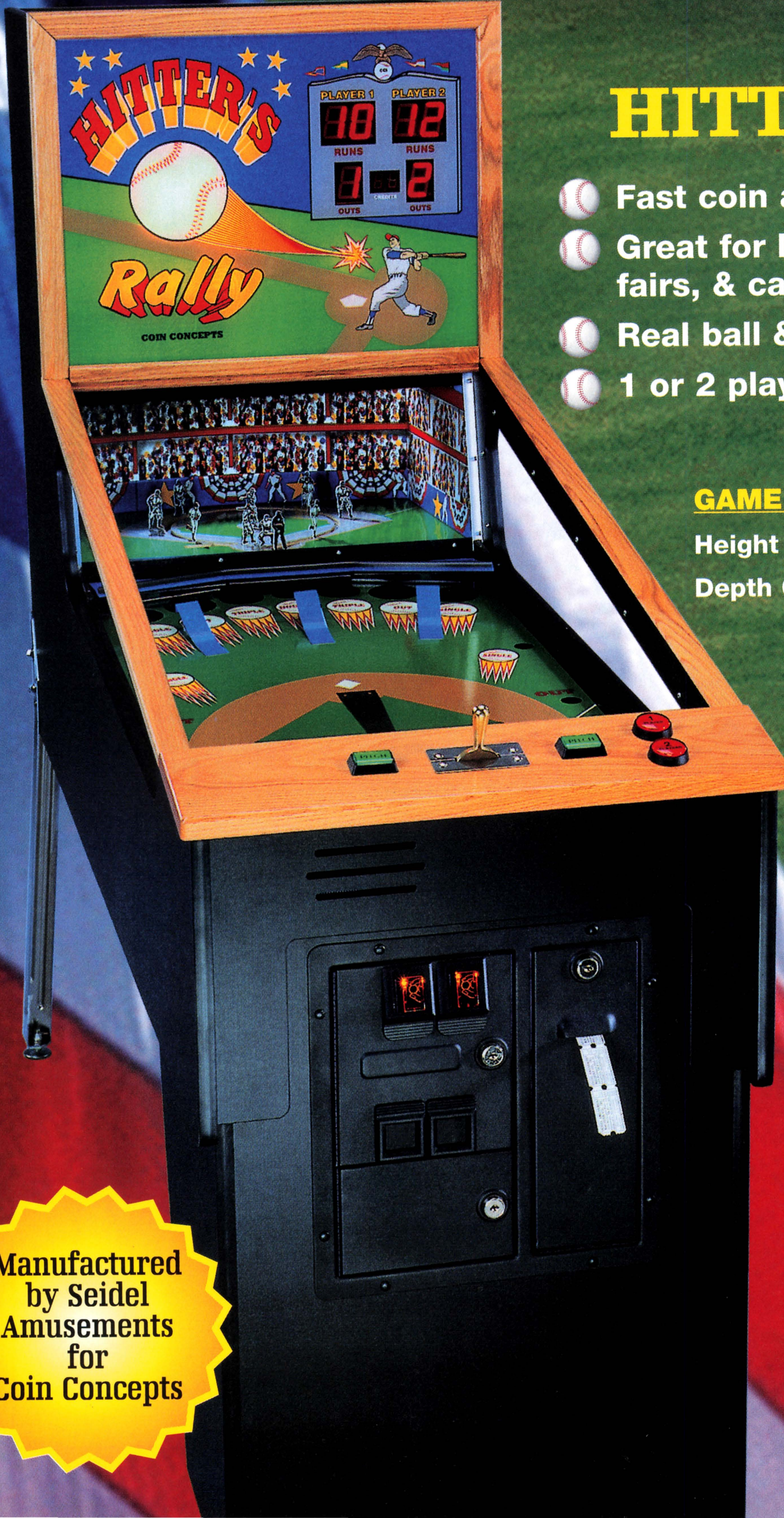
3) No cash can be awarded or refunded from any machines. Prizes may be awarded as long as the value does not violate gambling laws.

So what does all this mean for the operators and owners of FECs and arcades in Taiwan? More confusion and reluctance seems to be the general feeling. Although the first two regulations will serve to promote a better playing environment in arcades, the last one causes more headaches for the already suffering owners. Under a "regulation," the dispensing of prizes is left open for legal interpretation by local police. Therefore, the same machine could be legal in one arcade but not in another.

Many operators are hesitant to run redemption and prize machines for fear of having them confiscated or being arrested by local police who could all interpret the regulations differently.

The local coin-op association would much rather have these regulations passed as laws. Once this happens, all the gray area is removed from the equation. Local police would no longer be able to decide which ma-

Great then, BETTER NOW!


HITTER'S
Rally
PLAYER 1
PLAYER 2
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12
RUNS
RUNS
1
2
OUTS
CREDITS
OUTS
COIN CONCEPTS
TRIPLE
OUT
SINGLE
PUSH
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chines are legal and which are not. A clear cut description would be established of how to operate video and redemption machines in FECs and arcades. More importantly, Taipei's mayor would lose his power to impose his own regulations. The law would be handed down from a higher jurisdiction, effectively removing him from the problem.

Operators are now negotiating with authorities to clear up the prize dispensing problem. They have taken their case to the next level and are currently waiting to have it heard. With thousands of cases already before the legislature however, there doesn't seem to be a quick resolution for them. This still may be their best hope though. They are trying to find a way to speed up the hearing process and push their case ahead of others. The flip side is that the mayor's current term runs through December 1998, and because his views are largely shared by the voting public, his chances of re-election are very high.

A scene from the past when FECs welcomed players by the score.

For now FECs will continue to go dark as owners await the government process. They long for the electrifying atmosphere that once filled their crowded arcades. Most of all they miss the weekly collections that reinforced the idea that the amusement of children was indeed a good business to be in! ▲

Games sit idle as operators feel the frustration.

Entropy Intl. and Entropy USA have been in the amusement industry for more than 20 years. Tony Yeh is vice president of marketing for the Intl. company and Jeff Blair is the chief operating office for the USA group. Entropy is involved in the design and manufacture of coin-op games and parts. They can be reached at (908)506-0002, (800)241-0633, e-mail (entropyusa@sprynet.com) or Web site (www. entropyusa.com).

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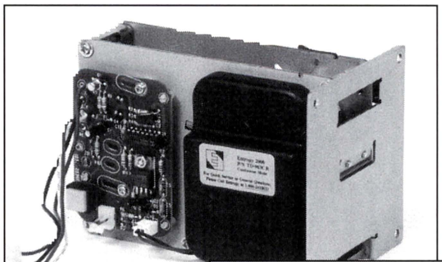

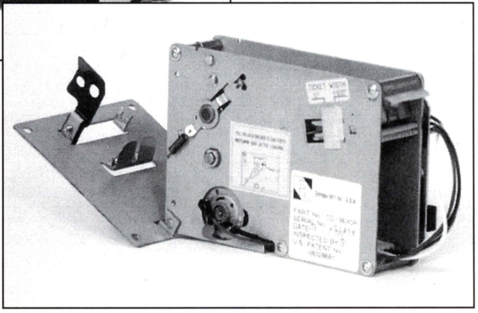

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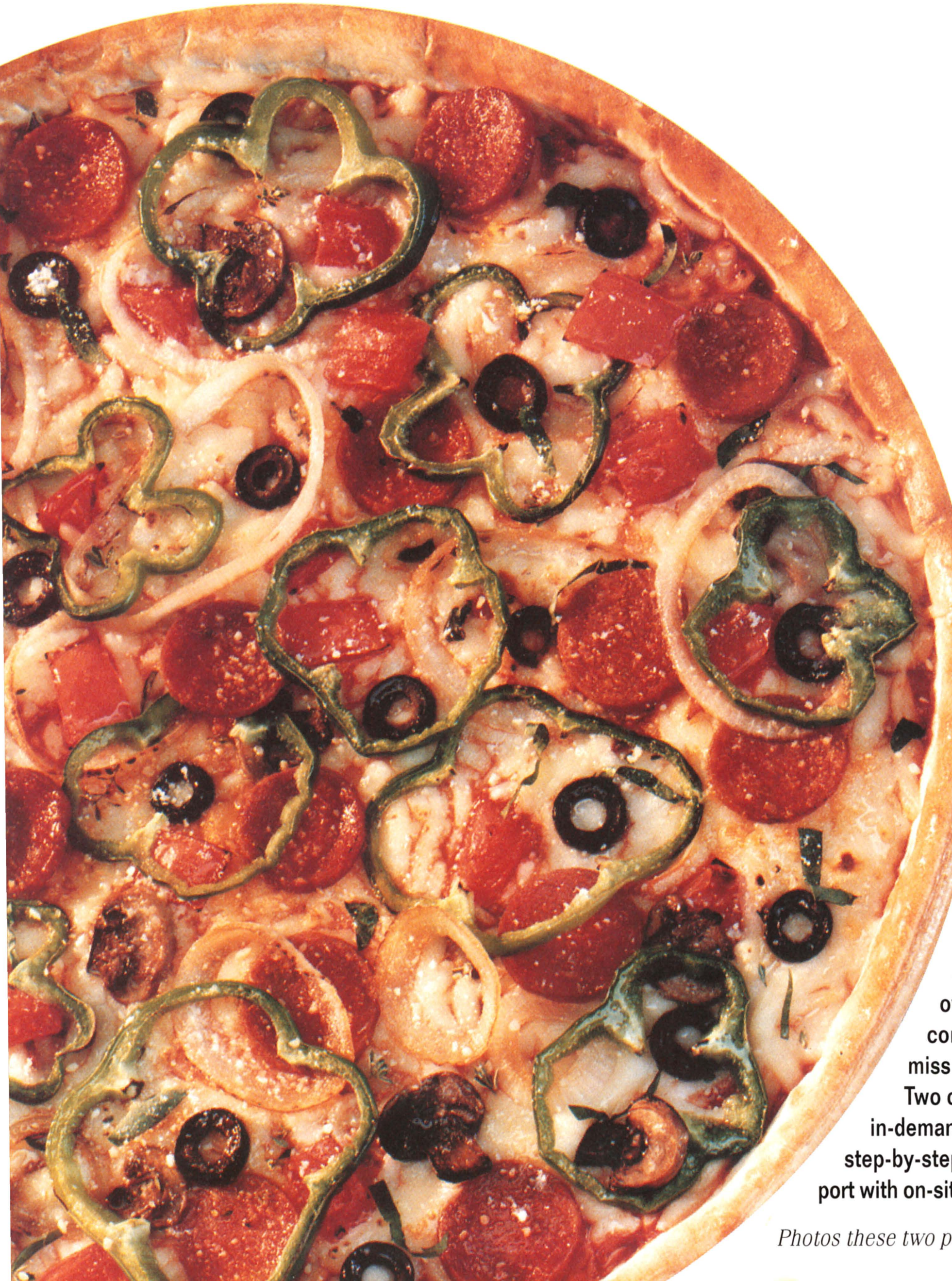
Annual Family Fun Edition

Passion for Pizza

BONNIE THEARD

ONE WHIFF IS ENOUGH TO TURN HEADS



At trade shows attendees catch the scent and follow it to the source, where a line has usually formed. With a deft hand the prized item is quickly divided and dispensed to eagerly extended hands.

All out? Bummer. When will the next one be ready?

The object of desire is fresh, hot pizza, dripping with a blend of melted cheeses, meat, and vegetable toppings. There is nothing better. It's healthier than you imagine, versatile, and forgiving. Plus, pizza is a high profit item. You can hardly go wrong, unless you exclude it from your food service menu.

Traditionally, FECs have ordered pizza from local franchises to include in birthday party packages as a way to offer the popular food but keep the lid on overhead costs. This limits the location's ability to control the quality and quantity of pizza needed and miss out on extra profits.

Two companies are making it easier to provide this tasty in-demand food product with turnkey programs that take you step-by-step through the preparation process and provide support with on-site training and follow-up.

Photos these two pages courtesy of Pizzas of Eight

Perky's Pizza

Perky's Pizza is a branded pizza program of parent company Professional Foodservice Concepts of Tampa, Fla. Perky's offers the benefits of a franchise without the high costs. This branded licensed concept, developed 10 years ago, also includes Sully's Subs, Boardwalk Fries, Eskimo Pie, Hillshire Farms Smoke House Deli, and other concession foods.

Account manager Chris Wild understands the hesitation of owners/operators when it comes to food service: "They are worried about what they are getting into. They feel it will be a nightmare and require a lot of work. We take the headaches out of food service and provide them with the materials to create a consistent product that tastes great."

> "One of the key risks in the FEC business is to make sure the food service lives up to the same quality as the entertainment product."

A high percentage of Perky's customers (30 to 40 percent) are in the family entertainment center business. According to company president Bob Sullivan, "We see the FEC market as rapidly growing. It's an area we are concentrating on."

Wild agrees: "We definitely see it as continuing to be our fastest growing industry. One of the best things is that we can create win-win situations."

As Sullivan sees it, "One of the key risks for anyone in the FEC business is to make sure their food service lives up to the same quality as their entertainment product. For example, an important FEC product is the birthday party, a personal event, with pizza as an integral part. The last thing remembered is the last experience, which is often the food. If that is poor, then it colors the whole entertainment experience."

Why is pizza so popular? "It's a fun food and it's universally accepted," explains Sullivan. His research on the international market revealed that the one fast food that could be exported from the United States that had no negatives was pizza. "We can still create a pizza that will be acceptable to different cultures with their own favorite traditional and non-traditional foods."

Perky's has locations in Korea, Australia, Ukraine, and Saudi Arabia, as well as nearly 400 nationally. The company is currently working with the new Wizards FEC in Budapest to put together a program for Hungary and Austria.

You don't have to go to another country for something different—in Louisiana you can get alligator sausage pizza. Pizza also has expanded in scope from a lunch or dinner item into the realm of breakfast and dessert foods.

Sullivan brings up another issue: "From the FEC's point of view it's important to have someone who really understands that business and the types of fun foods that go with a fun center. We understand the target audience and the format of FECs. We've taken time to study the industry for the last five years."

Perky's will design and lay out the food service area, as well as train food service personnel and supply marketing support in the form of signs, T-shirts, caps, menu handouts, and more. The pizza is created from dough balls in three sizes: eight-inch personal size, 12-inch medium, and 14-inch or 16-inch large. The sauce is a mix of specialty herbs and the cheese is a blend of mozzarella, white cheddar, and provolone. Ingredients come pre-prepared in the correct size to suit the end product.

Camelot Lanes & Sportsplex

One FEC that adopted Perky's program two years ago is Camelot Lanes & Sportsplex in Portage, Ind. It features 48 bowling lanes, banquet and party rooms, 55 coin-op games, and an arena for indoor hockey, soccer, and rollerblading. According to gen-

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WINGS
HOT DOGS
NACHOS
perky's pizza
perky's

The Perky's Pizza kiosk at Camelot Lanes & Sportsplex in Portage, Ind.

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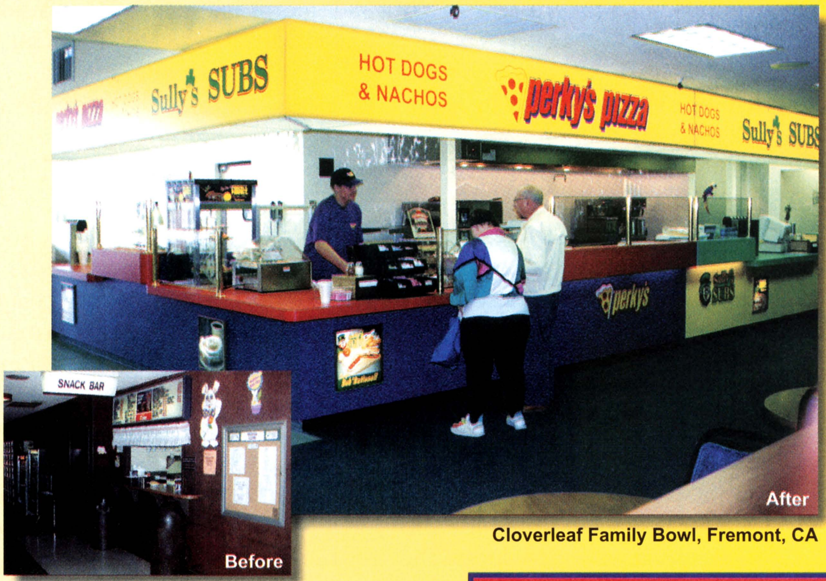

Cloverleaf Family Bowl, Fremont, CA

In preparing for the 21st century, I understood that every area of my bowling center had to be profitable. The snack bar was one area that definitely needed to be upgraded.

When I was looking for a program to enhance my foodservice area, I wanted to go with a quality system that was easy to operate. The people at Perky's are pros, they handled everything from design to implementation and training. Perky's is a great set-up, it does everything we want it to do, and ***Perky's Pizza tastes great!***

We are able to offer a wide variety of menu choices including their Sully's Subs program which we added at the last minute and has turned out to be a great success! Everything is so easy to prepare, and it all tastes great. My customers love it too, and that is what it's all about.

Perky's foodservice concession program has proven to be a profitable vehicle to carry us into the 21st century.

Don Hillman,
Cloverleaf Family Bowl
Fremont, California

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eral manager Doug DeGroff, you can't beat the freshness factor and visual appeal of pizza made in your own location.

Says DeGroff: "It's one thing to see someone make the pizza in front of you. The high visibility and impact leaves you with the perception that it is a more quality item. It has increased the profitability of the snack bar to all-time highs, much better compared to the old days when we just had the standard snack bar.

DeGroff reaffirms the popularity of pizza: "It's probably the most popular food item among younger kids. We do a lot of birthday parties and the pizzeria is a nice niche."

Camelot has a kiosk operation with counters and a walk-up window. Says DeGroff: "The pizzas are easy to produce from start to finish, generally about eight minutes. It's consistently good tasting. Our bowling league customers come back on the weekend for our pizza. And during bowling banquet time we can keep the fresh pizzas coming."

LaserStorm

In Thornton, Colo., LaserStorm general manager of operations Rick Schwartz has had a similar experience. "Perky's offered all the food service we wanted at the right price. We do pizza, hot dogs, nachos and cheese, cookies, and sodas. We've had it since we opened in October 1996."

Schwartz had no food service experience prior to this location, which features two arenas of laser tag next to a Namco facility. "It's been a learning experience," he says, "We do a lot of party business here. Having the food service on-site has made life easier and increased the gross margin on the parties. Parents are pleased with the product, and the children tend to eat more of their pizza." The most popular topping? Pepperoni.

"People come in just to have dinner and that blows me away," says Schwartz. "The crust is like pizzeria crust. What sets this pizza apart is that Perky's taught us to be generous with ingredients. While it may drive up the cost slightly, the product we deliver brings people back."

Q-Zar in Tampa, Fla., found Perky's food service to be a good match to laser tag.

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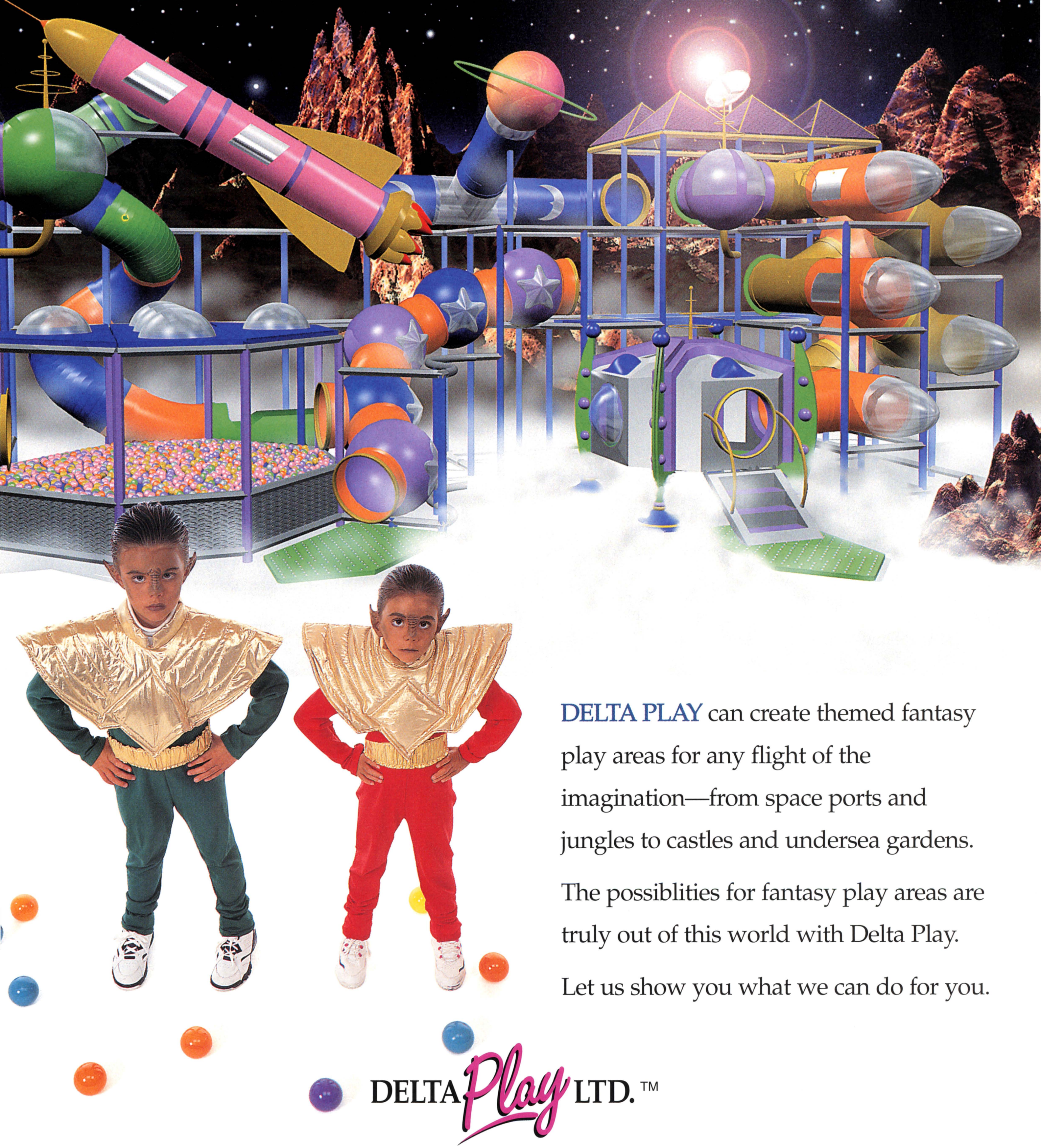

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Pizzas of Eight

If you're interested in a turnkey pizza program you may consider a visit to the Pizzas of Eight showroom in St. Louis, Mo. At company headquarters you can see a variety of counter-serve units to fit your needs.

Parent company Petrofsky's International, which began as a small corner bakery, has been making dough and other baked goods for over 50 years. Pizzas of Eight was established four years ago to fill a need in both the amusement industry and other non-traditional locations. After 18 months of research and development, the pizza program was launched in November 1994.

> **"With a pizza delivery arrangement, if you need more or there is a problem, you're out of luck because you are not controlling the product."**

Abe Smith, director of sales and marketing, finds that customers "not only request but demand pizza. To promote a birthday party business FECs need pizza."

But it's not just any pizza. There has been a tendency to get away from frozen and microwaved pizza, says Smith. A typical operator pays near retail price to bring in pizza from an outside source so the profit margin is limited.

Smith advises: "If you bake it yourself it has a high profit margin and it becomes a valuable part of your business. With a pizza delivery arrangement you have no control if you need more or there is a problem, such as late delivery. You're out of luck because you're not controlling the product."

Owners/operators who want to add more value and have more control can accomplish those goals by operating a variety of incentives, such as branded food service, without franchise fees.

That's where Pizzas of Eight comes in. "It's a fresh-out-of-the-oven pizza," explains Smith. "Quality is much higher and there is a perceived higher value for general customers and party-goers."

The Pizzas of Eight branded program covers all the cooking equipment including the conveyor belt oven, on-site training for two days at the start, and a return visit 30 days later to be sure everything is running smoothly. Training manuals and videos are provided to the location for further reference. In addition, the company publishes a quarterly newsletter called "The Big Dough" that features helpful articles and tips gleaned from in-the-field experiences.

Pizzas of Eight provides simple instructions and portion control guides that make it possible for anyone to make a good pizza, says Smith, adding, "We create a signature look with our nautical theme, which drives the concession stand business and increases revenues." Return on investment depends on the volume of product produced.

Pizzas of Eight also guarantees technical support on a 24-hour basis through toll-free help lines. Only quality ingredients are used; the special cheese topping is a blend of 100 percent real low-moisture mozzarella, provolone, and white cheddar. According to Smith, Pizzas of Eight is introducing new products that run through the oven, such as fresh-baked pretzels.

The company recently introduced a new Junior Program for locations that have existing food service with refrigeration and other elements already in place. The entry level cost is less than a full-blown system where no food service existed before.

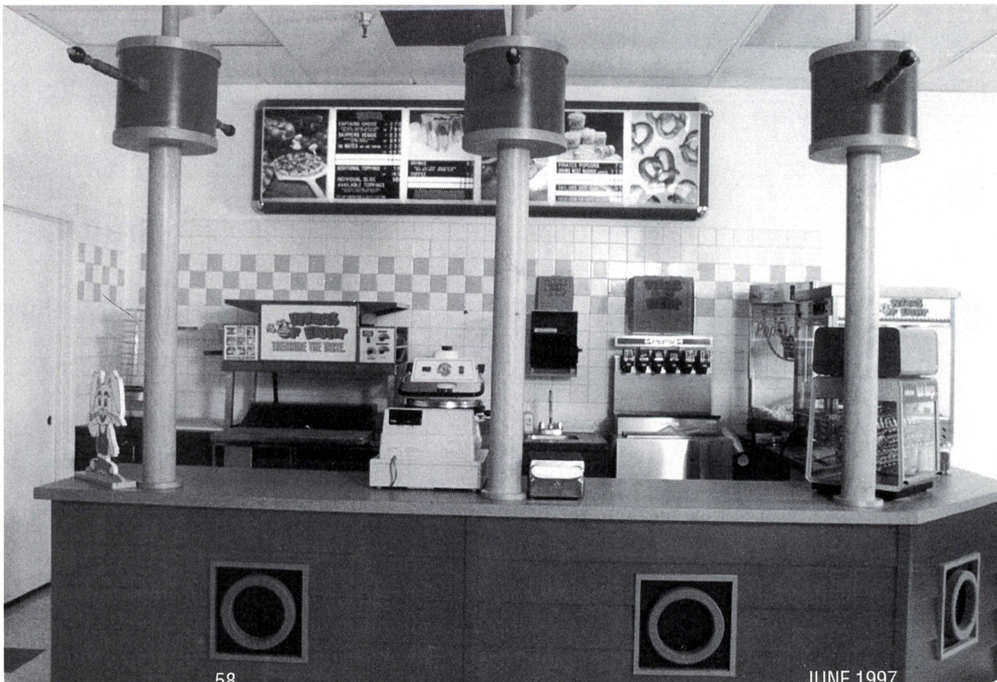
Fun Quarters

The 10,000-square-foot Fun Quarters FEC in Eldersburg, Md., changed from local contracts for pizza to their own in-house Pizzas of Eight program in January. Manager Kathy McCrade says, "It's the best move we ever made. Everybody loves it!

"Since we added Pizzas of Eight it's doubled if not tripled our food business. On weekdays a manager prepares the pizza and on the weekends when it's busy we have a full staff doing pizzas for the parties."

McCrade says Fun Quarters has received excellent feedback on the comment cards from their birthday parties, where cheese or pepperoni pizzas are the most popular.

Fun Quarters has been open two-and-a-half years and offers soft activity zones, a kiddie raceway, five birthday party rooms, a 60-game arcade, and the snack bar. Pizza does a brisk business with adult customers as well as children.



The Pizzas of Eight food service center at MeadowBrook Family Fun Center in Yakima, Wash.

Pizzas of Eight

MeadowBrook Family Fun Center

Sherry and Mark Needham of Yakima, Wash., are equally happy with the addition of a Pizzas of Eight program at their MeadowBrook Family Fun Center. The couple started with a portable miniature golf course in 1988 and gradually added attractions such as batting cages, go-kart track, bumper boat pond, and 70-game arcade with video and redemption games.

In 1996 they added Pizzas of Eight, because, as Mark says, "We needed food, but we were not experts in the food business. It scared us. We wanted to go with someone who had a product already developed with a real professional look." Sherry agreed, "We wanted it nice, easy, and simple, but good tasting." A visit to IAAPA '95 was the deciding point.

The Needhams needed food service for two reasons: to help their birthday party business and to keep customers in the location. "We've made it more convenient for customers," says Sherry. "It's done exactly what we wanted it to do." Before Pizzas of Eight only popcorn and drinks were available.

Adds Mark: "We didn't add food service with the idea in mind that it had to be a profit center by itself, but it is developing into one. We're anxiously awaiting pretzels. We think it would be a great addition because it's the kind of snack food people would eat in a location like ours."

"We were nervous about going into the food business," admits Mark. "But with this system it was painless." ▲

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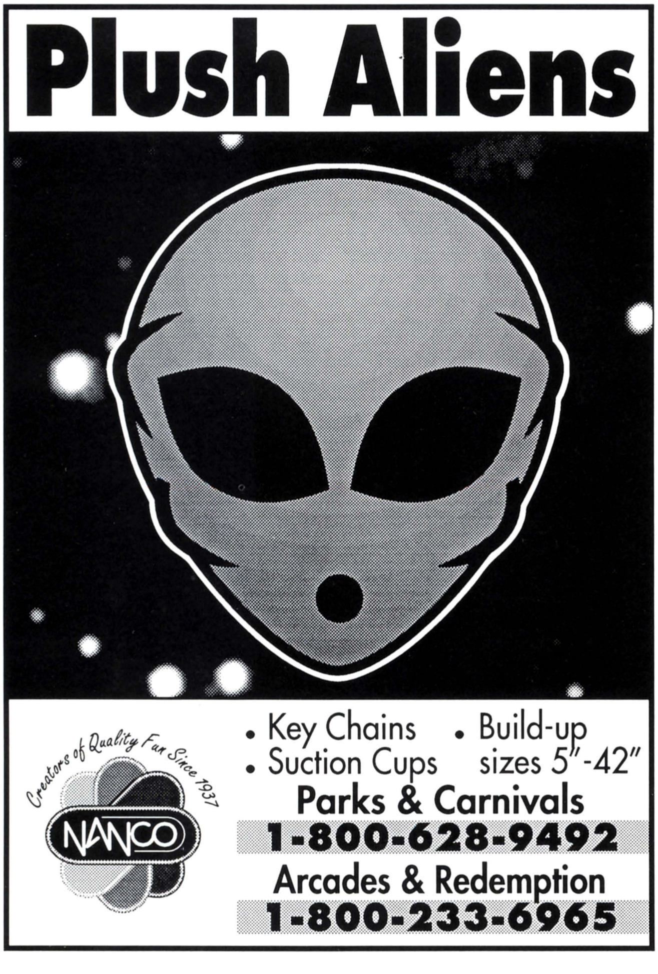
A typical Pizzas of Eight counterserve unit with point-of-purchase displays, menu board, and posters.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ABC

You CAN start small with food service

If space is tight but you want to add that extra value and keep customers in your location, there is a solution: vending machines.

Where once game rooms posted signs saying, "No food or drink allowed," today's line of thought leans toward relaxing that former rule. The starting point can be as simple as two units: a cold soda and fruit juice machine and a glass-front merchandiser stocked with popular name brand chips, snack crackers, cookies, and candy.

Jack Boasberg, president of New Orleans Novelty Co., sees the need for such game room additions: "It's the whole idea of giving customers a little extra and keeping them in the arcade longer continuing to play our games. Years ago we only had a chilled water fountain. Now we want to give a few extras–provide a full experience of food and fun."

He added, "We see what's happening in large operations like Dave & Busters and we're trying to incorporate that concept on a smaller scale."

Boasberg recently added a pizza vending machine to his glass-front vendor and cold drink machine at one of the company's Fun Arcade locations. It is a unique machine that stores the pizza (at 20 degrees) and cooks it, all in one unit. There is no MSG and no preservatives. Choices are triple cheese or pepperoni.

So far, most pizza sales are late in the evening. The goal is to develop a midday business so customers can come on their lunch hour to play games, compete, have a pizza, and then go back to the office.

Says Boasberg, "The question is, are the numbers going to work?" While it's too early to tell how successful the addition will be, it's an interesting idea. ▲

10 Pizza Fun Facts

- **Italian immigrant Gennaro Lombardi opened the first American pizzeria in 1905 in New York.**
- **The vast majority of pizzas sold (80%) are cheese, pepperoni, or Italian sausage pizzas.**
- **Americans eat 100 acres of pizza per day.**
- **People with wind chimes on their porch are four times more likely to order olives on their pizza.**
- **The #1 half-hour delivery period for meat-topped pizza is when the program "Roseanne" airs on TV.**
- **People with a Lexus in the driveway generally tip 20% below average while those with a Taurus in the driveway tip the highest.**
- **The single greatest hour for pizza delivery in the nation's history occurred in June 1995 during the O.J. Simpson white Bronco car chase in Los Angeles, Calif.**
- **Today the average American eats pizza at least twice a week and demand is on the rise.**
- **To build an outstanding pizza, place toppings on the crust in this order: sauce, cheese, pepperoni, onions, mushrooms, other meats, more cheese.**
- **6.5 billion lbs. of pizza toppings are consumed each year. (The breakdown: pepperoni—371 million lbs., sausage—192 million lbs., tomatoes—3.7 billion lbs., mozzarella—1.9 billion lbs., mushrooms—148 million lbs., (each) beef and green pepper—59 million lbs., ham—74 million lbs., bacon— 29 million lbs.).**

Sources: Pizzas of Eight, The Boston Herald, and The Domino's Pizza Meter.

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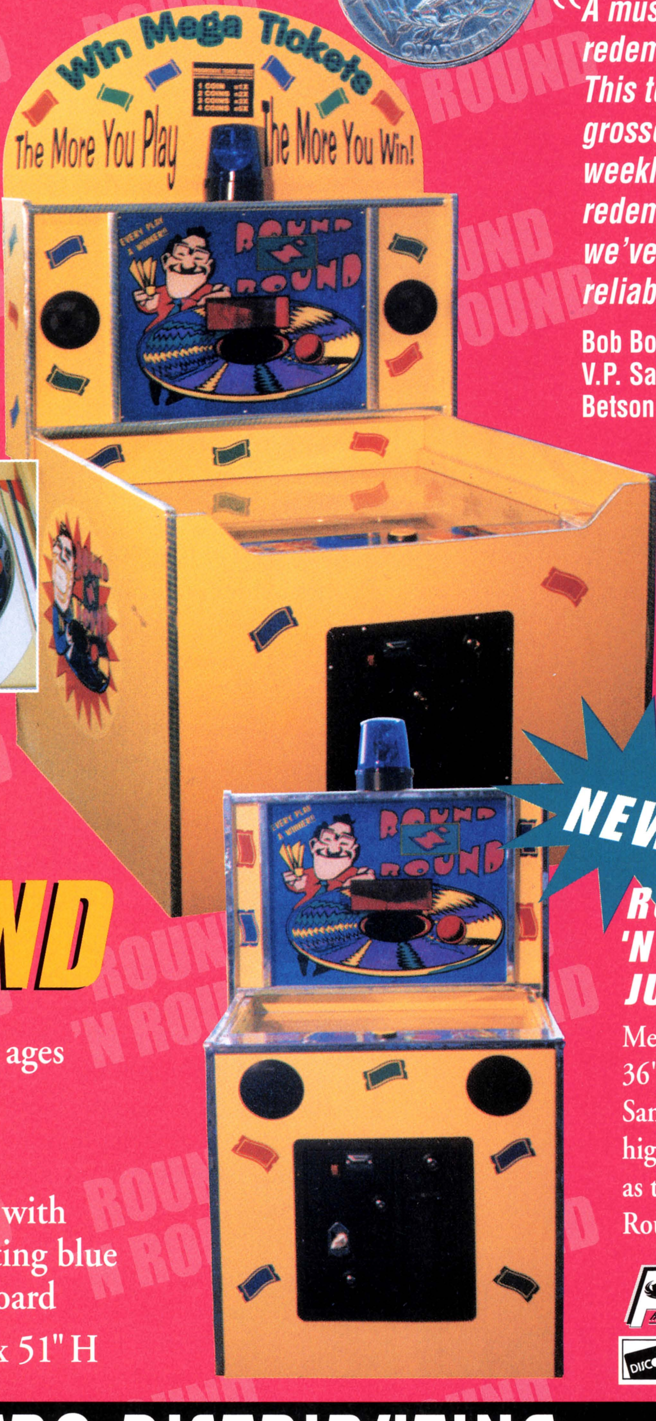

> "A must for all redemption centers! This top earner grosses $500-$600 weekly in every redemption center we've placed. A very reliable product."

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A REALITY CHECK IS WORTH THE EFFORT

Rhonda Fletcher and Sue Monday have done an excellent job planning the redemption field trip during the past several years at a number of trade shows. As the attendees visit various locations, Sue and Rhonda arm them with some significant questions to ask themselves about each location. How did they come with these questions? "We learned from our own mistakes," Rhonda tells us.

We thought it would be worthwhile for you to take this list and honestly answer the questions about your own place. You may be surprised.

Rhonda Fletcher says that often the things that go without saying are overlooked. FEC owners may have a view of the huge picture but pass over the details that make the difference between success and failure. Don't let those little details be your downfall. Take this list of questions, or better yet, get someone else to visit your location and be honest with you.

GENERAL

1) How is the exterior signage? Does it adequately identify an FEC? Is the location highly visable.

2) Is there an adequate number of entrances? Are children able to leave without their parents? What type of security do you have in place at the doorways? Would you feel secure bringing your own youngsters to your FEC?

3) Are the bathrooms clean and well stocked? Is there water on the floor and trash all over? Are the cubicles checked regularly?

4) How hot do you keep your water? Would young children burn themselves if they put their hands under the hottest setting? Does it take too long for the water to get hot?

5) Are the ceiling tiles in place and clean? Is the carpet held down by duct tape? Are there places a customer could trip?

6) Even if you feel that the security in the location is adequate, how safe is the parking lot? Is the lighting out there bright enough? Are all the lightbulbs working?

7) Is there adequate parking available? Is the parking lot kept spotlessly clean?

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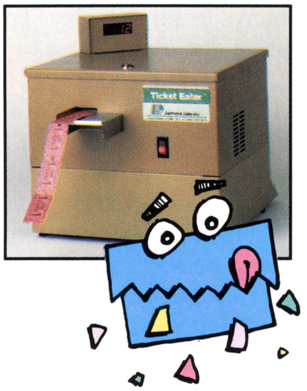

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8) If your place adjoins another attraction with separate entrances, are there signs leading people to your FEC?

9) Do you see technicians making repairs during business hours? Are there way too many "out of order" signs? What do your signs look like (hastily scribbled on anything handy or a professional sign)?

From left: Rhonda Fletcher (ARMS Intl.), Canoli the Clown, and Sue Monday (Spirit Design) at the Circus Circus midway during the ACME '95 redemption field trip.

MERCHANDISE/ REDEMPTION

1) Is it difficult to find the redemption counter? Is it well maintained, stocked, and clean?

2) Is the staff helpful and knowledgeable about the product?

3) Does it appear that the staff has food or drinks behind the counter?

4) How do you honestly rate the redemption prize merchandise itself? Are there too many/too few slum items? Are the prizes arranged in an attractive way?

5) Is the merchandise being used for promotional purposes? If so, is the promotion easily understood?

6) How is the merchandise displayed:

a) Number of counters?

b) Type of categories like sports, jewelry, balls, stationery, etc.?

c) Lighting?

d) Merchandise clearly identified and priced?

e) Novel ways of displaying merchandise?

f) Theme of the showcase?

g) Trim on the showcase cabinet? Are children visable by the attendant?

h) Do you have a reliable way of tracking the inventory?

i) How do you handle losses?

7) Is the glass top of the redemption counter free of fingerprints, cup rings, and clutter?

EMPLOYEES

1) How helpful is the redemption staff? Are they clean and in uniform (that includes a smile!)?

2) Do you see uniformed employees playing games instead of attending to customers?

3) Are there enough employees based on the size and scope of the area?

4) Can you readily identify an employee?

5) Is the security team visable?

6) Are the employees courteous and ready, willing, and able to help? It may be a good time to assses your policy on what employees are authorized to do in the case of an irate customer. Can they make decisions or must they wait for top management?

7) Do the employees keep an eye for trash on the floor and quickly pick it up without being told to? Do they regularly check the restrooms and games to make sure they're clean?

MACHINES

1) If you own your own machines, do they look as good as other locations that hire an outside operator?

2) How did you arrive at your product mix? Is there a certain type of equipment that sits idle more than it should? How often do you update your games?

3) Are your games (especially video) current? Have they been in the same spot more than a month?

4) How are your games sectioned off? Are video games mixed with redemption?

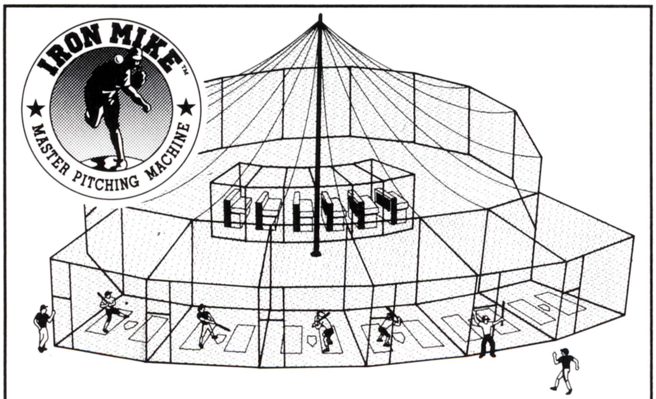
5) How convenient is the redemption counter to the redemption games?

6) What are the games paying out (tickets or tokens) and are there different values?

7) Are the games conducive to serious play? For example, are there stools in front of games and cups or containers to accumulate tickets?

8) Is the game rating system being used on your games?

Now that you've taken a critical look at your location by answering these questions, take a few more minutes and add some of your own. You may want to call and see how the phone is being answered. How many times have you called somewhere only to be confronted by someone giving a really bad image of the business? Anyway, there are things you may think of that aren't on the list and if there are, why don't you fax them to Play Meter and we'll add them to this list. Thanks! ▲



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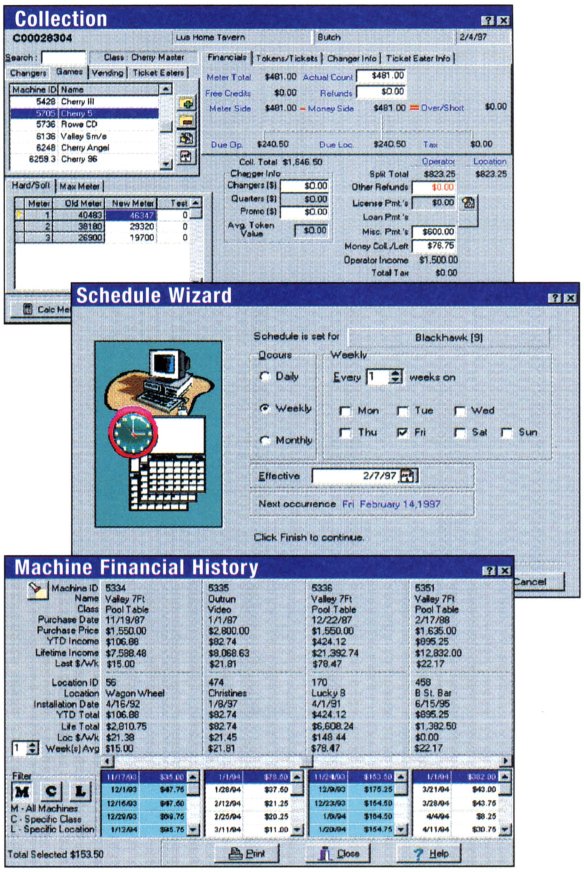

Collection

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Machine ID	Name
5428	Cherry III
5705	Cherry 5
5736	Rowe CD
6136	Valley Sm/e
6248	Cherry Angel
6259.3	Cherry 96

Hard/Soft | Max Meter

Meter	Old Meter	New Meter	Test
1	40483	46347	0
2	38180	29320	0
3	26900	19700	0

Financials | Tokens/Tickets | Changer Info | Ticket Eater Info

Meter Total $481.00 Actual Count $481.00
Free Credits $0.00 Refunds $0.00
Meter Side $481.00 − Money Side $481.00 = Over/Short $0.00
Due Op. $240.50 Due Loc. $240.50 Tax $0.00

Coll. Total $1,646.50

Changer Info
Changers ($) $0.00
Quarters ($) $0.00
Promo ($) $0.00
Avg. Token Value $0.00

	Operator	Location
Split Total	$823.25	$823.25
Other Refunds	$0.00	
License Pmt.'s	$0.00	
Loan Pmt.'s		
Misc. Pmt.'s	$600.00	
Money Coll./Left	$76.75	
Operator Income	$1,500.00	
Total Tax	$0.00	

Schedule Wizard

Schedule is set for Blackhawk [9]

Occurs
○ Daily
● Weekly
○ Monthly

Weekly
Every 1 weeks on
☐ Mon ☐ Tue ☐ Wed
☐ Thu ☑ Fri ☐ Sat ☐ Sun

Effective 2/7/97

Next occurrence Fri February 14,1997

Click Finish to continue.

Machine Financial History

Machine ID	5334	5335	5336	5351
Name	Valley 7Ft	Outrun	Valley 7Ft	Valley 7Ft
Class	Pool Table	Video	Pool Table	Pool Table
Purchase Date	11/19/87	1/1/87	12/22/87	2/17/88
Purchase Price	$1,550.00	$2,800.00	$1,550.00	$1,635.00
YTD Income	$106.88	$82.74	$424.12	$895.25
Lifetime Income	$7,588.48	$8,068.63	$21,392.74	$12,832.00
Last $/Wk	$15.00	$21.81	$78.47	$22.17
Location ID	56	474	170	458
Location	Wagon Wheel	Christines	Lucky 8	B St. Bar
Installation Date	4/16/92	1/8/97	4/1/91	6/15/95
YTD Total	$106.88	$82.74	$424.12	$895.25
Life Total	$2,810.75	$82.74	$6,608.24	$1,382.50
Loc $/Wk	$21.38	$21.45	$148.44	$0.00
1 Week(s) Avg	$15.00	$21.81	$78.47	$22.17

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12/16/93	$47.60	2/12/94	$21.25	12/23/93	$164.50	3/28/94	$43.75
12/29/93	$58.75	2/25/94	$20.25	1/6/94	$164.50	4/4/94	$8.25
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SLUGGERS & PUTTERS

Family Sports Park scores hole-in-one

4th Annual Family Fun Edition

Residents take their sports seriously in Stark County, Ohio, where high school football games can draw crowds of between 15,000 and 20,000 fans, and the Pro Football Hall of Fame is close by. A landscape design construction company owner with vision and a love for both entertainment and sports combined the two elements in a 20-acre family operated facility that offers enjoyable activities for every age group.

Refurbished Mother Goose and Wizard of Oz characters dot the themed and attractively landscaped Adventure Mini Golf.

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1993: Six championship beach volleyball courts with league and tournament play.

1994: Thunder Road Speedway Indy-style go-kart track for all family members.

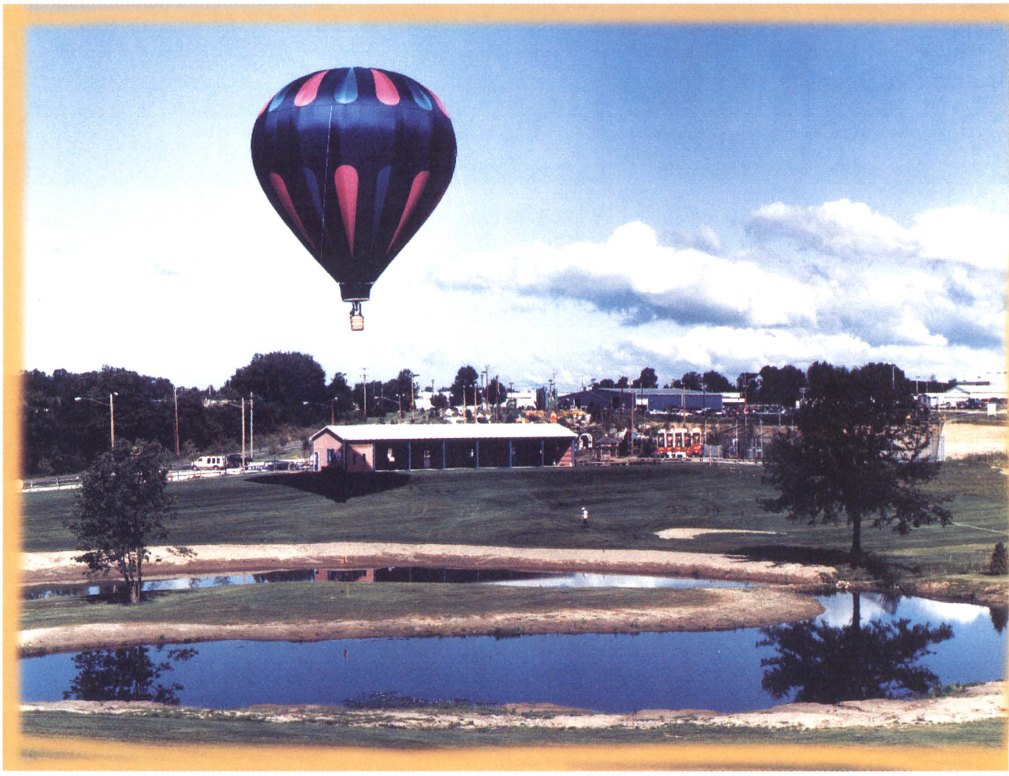
1995: Thunder Bay Bumper Boats in a real swimming pool; enclosed original tee shelter for 30-game arcade.

1996: Naskart go-kart track (complete with league program); Munchkins Village kiddie ride park.

1997: Ohio's only "Honey, I shrunk the course" 18-hole Bent grass golf putting course for adults.

Tim McCully was drawn to the idea of a family sports park in 1990. "There was a need for it in northeast Ohio," he explains.

His first stop in the research process was the annual IAAPA Convention and Trade Show (in Washington, D.C., that year) where he gleaned valuable information by attending seminars and speaking with industry members. The pre-development stage lasted two years as Tim and his wife Rhonda refined the project that has become Sluggers & Putters Family Sports Park in Canal Fulton, Ohio, three miles from Canton and close to a major interstate highway. The fun center at 333 Lafayette Drive draws from Stark County (population 390,000) and Summit County (population 550,000).



The 12-acre practice range features water and hilly terrain. Behind it: the arcade, Hoops! basketball, and Adventure Mini Golf.

STARTING OUT

The McCullys purchased a 20-acre tract and opened their fun center in 1992 with four attractions: Adventure Mini Golf, a course heavily themed to Mother Goose (nine holes) and the Wizard of Oz (nine holes); a 12-acre golf practice range; five batting cages; and the Hoops! trailer-model five-unit basketball game.

The Adventure Mini Golf course is steeped in local history. Figures on the course were purchased from a 1950s kiddie land that had long since closed and fallen into disrepair. The McCullys refurbished the characters and gave them a new life for another generation to enjoy. According to McCully, it is not unusual for people in their 40s to bring childhood photos of themselves taken by the same characters. Seventy percent of the clientele on the course is over the age of 20.

The 12-acre practice range features grass tees, 13 target greens, full irrigation, water, sound, and hilly terrain—a tribute to McCully's landscaping skills. He calculates that a half million tons of soil were moved to construct the course. "People actually think it's a par three designed to look like a golf course," he says. "Actually it's designed to use every club in your bag, not just a driver."

McCully sees a trend of stand-alone practice ranges now becoming FECs. In that regard his center is a forerunner of such facilities.

The batting cages are from Automated Batting Cages. McCully has five

> *"My job is to make sure customers have a good time and walk out of here with a smile on their faces."*

A mother and son enjoy Thunder Bay Bumper Boats.

cages and seven machines. The reasoning: "I'd rather have people standing in line than have cages empty." The Hoops! unit serves double-duty since it can be rented out for festivals and fairs. In a seasonal business it has turned out to be a versatile piece of equipment.

EXPANSION

Over the next several years the McCullys continued to attend IAAPA events and then the Fun Expo as they expanded and added new attractions such as six championship beach volleyball courts, an Indy-style go-kart track called Thunder Road Speedway, Thunder Bay Bumper Boats from J & J Amusements, and a Naskart track.

The volleyball courts are finished with 900 tons of white silica sand. Regular tournaments and leagues draw local players as well as some from as far away as Canada, says McCully.

McCully's landscaping background is evident at every turn, including Thunder Road Speedway, which he characterizes as "pleasing to the eye instead of just concrete. It has remote shut-off, a total sound system, the whole shot—a first-class track with 11 single karts and three double-seater karts."

Families, not just kids, can enjoy the go-karts. Sluggers and Putters' slogan is "Family fun close to home." Says McCully: "We hit on the family theme continuously. We offer something for just about any age."

The Naskart track is oval with five-foot bank turns, the only one of its kind in Ohio. Here McCully also taps into the league market and creatively sells advertising on the karts to local companies such as radio stations. The sponsorship fee is $500 per kart per season.

Next came the Munchkins Village of children's rides that accommodates little ones from walking age up to seven years old. Included are a Ferris wheel, large merry-go-round, train, swings, antique car ride, and an inflatable bouncer.

McCully also enclosed a building originally designed for a tee shelter and turned it into a 2,300-square-foot arcade with 30 games—mostly videos, sports games, and billiard tables—arranged through a local operator. "Whatever is the newest and the best I will get for my location," says McCully.

The 1997 addition to the park is an 18-hole Bent grass putting course for adults. It features par threes, fours, and fives, and doglegs to the right and left. "The course is designed to improve your putting game and be entertaining," affirms McCully.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

To date the McCullys have developed 17-1/2 acres of their original 20 and purchased another 47 acres for the future. They attribute their success to controlled growth and the application of Disney philosophy. McCully attended Disney landscaping design school, called Landscape Magic, and adopted elements of the Disney approach to family parks. Says McCully:

Thunder Road Speedway go-karts were added in 1994.

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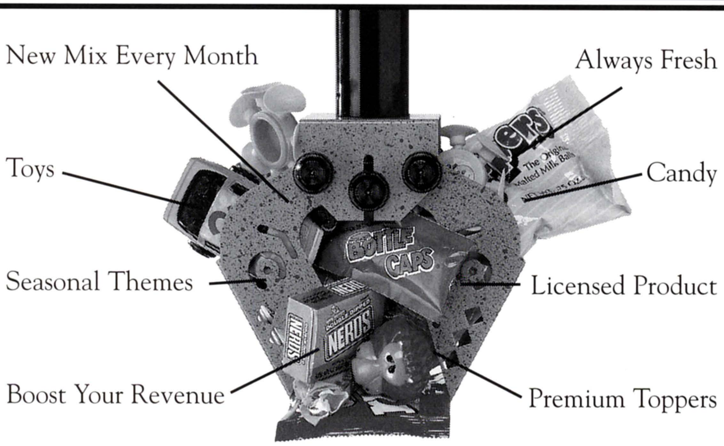
"Like Disney we are people-oriented and management-oriented. Our place is very, very clean."

While Sluggers & Putters is strictly seasonal and mainly outdoors, it does host birthday parties and offers a limited food service of sodas and juice, a variety of vending machines, and a portable pushcart for ice cream and novelty products. Pizza delivery is arranged locally, which reduces overhead.

For two years the McCullys had a custom-built concession trailer for serving hot dogs, pizza, shaved ice, and snacks but noticed that customers were not coming to the park to eat. Five or six restaurants are close by.

Tim and Rhonda do mostly everything. Says McCully: "We wear a lot of hats." Forty-five part time workers complete the seasonal staff.



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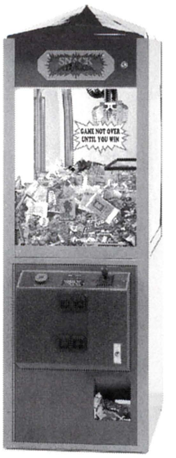

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SOUND ADVICE

The FEC market has greatly expanded since Tim and Rhonda first opened their business six seasons ago. How does he see the somewhat saturated market today? "The problem with this industry is there are some people who have more money than brains," he says candidly. "FECs seem to open bigger than the next guy. Then they start discounting very heavy. There are only so many days and people are only going to sample each attraction so many times."

He takes a similarly realistic approach to other subjects, such as coupons. "Coupons are an effective way to advertise in the beginning. Once you're established you don't have to give those things away. It can't get to where people won't go if there is no coupon.

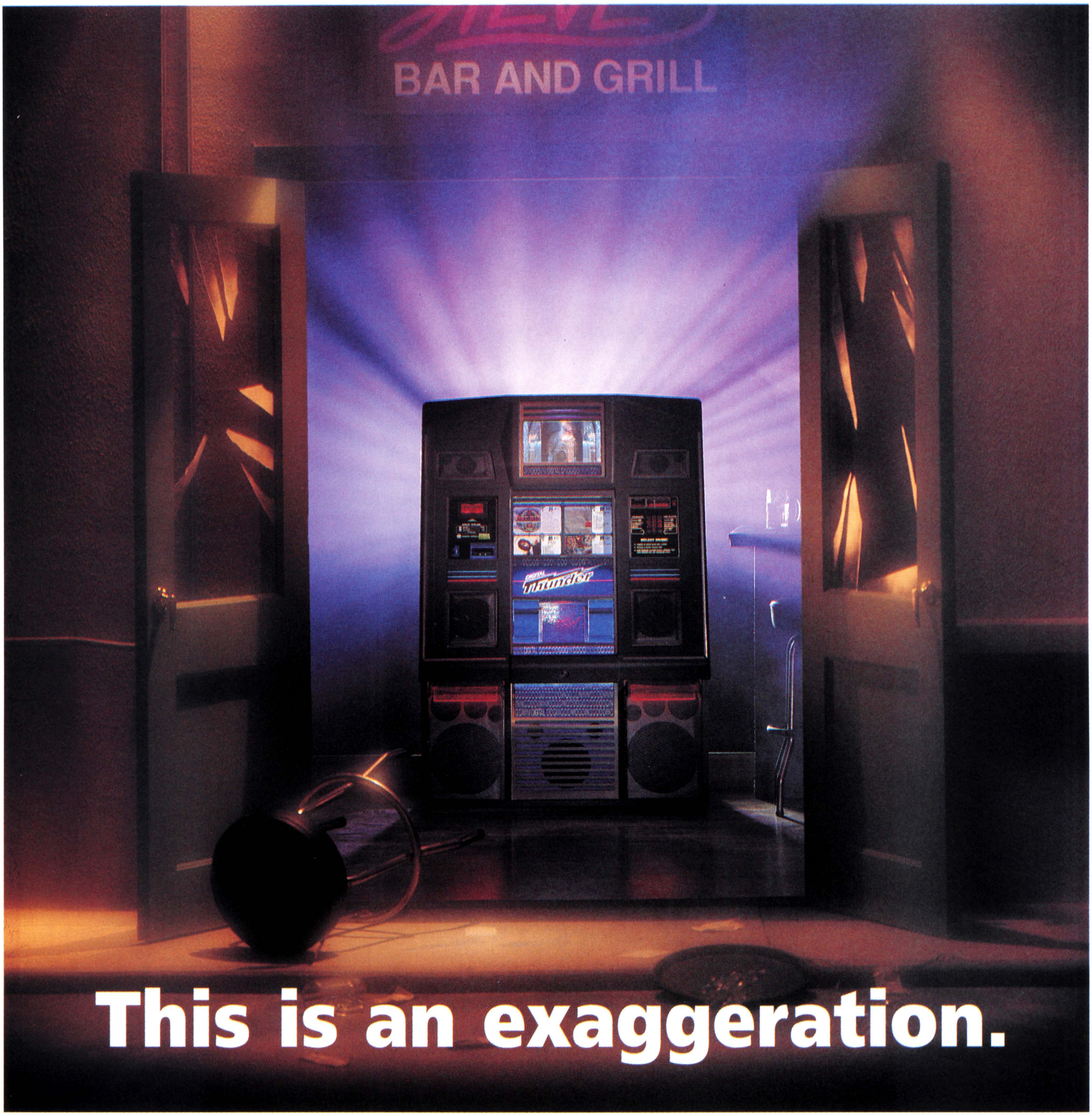
"You have to be careful to give the customers value and not depend on discount specials. It has to be a win-win situation for both the customers and the park."

On the topic of FEC acquisitions: "Right now people are going around trying to buy up FECs. That amazes me. It's not as easy as everyone thinks. The ones that are surviving are the ones that are owner-operated."

McCully sees his mission in the FEC business in simple terms: "My job is to make sure customers have a good time and walk out of here with a smile on their faces." ▲

Sluggers & Putters Family Fun Park is open six months of the year. The typical stay is from two-and-a-half to three hours. The parking lot accommodates 95 cars. Customers can choose to pay-to-play by individual attraction, opt for one of several group packages, or purchase a fun pack ($14.95) that provides access to the most popular attractions.

There are Happy Hour prices for gokarts from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday and Wild Wednesday and Fun Friday prices from noon to 4 p.m. that give extra value. Special packages can be designed for group outings and corporate picnics that include a visit to the sports park plus bike and canoe rentals arranged in conjunction with other local companies.



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4th Annual Family Fun Edition

12 most frequently asked questions about redemption

Q: What is redemption?

A: Redemption is the fun retailing of merchandise through the redeeming of tickets or tokens.

Q: How many redemption machines do I need to purchase for my game room?

A: Fifty percent to 60 percent of your machine purchases should be redemption machines.

Q: What is meant by machine mix?

A: Machine mix is the variation of successful machines you need to purchase for your locations. The mix must satisfy the entertainment desires of all ages.

Q: Should I use tokens or coins in my game room?

A: Tokens are suggested. They enable you to discount for special events or run promotions.

Q: Should my tokens be personalized?

A: Yes. Personalized tokens help keep your name out there. Your customers take them out of your facility, and they are a reminder to them to return.

Q: What value should I put on my tickets?

A: Keep it simple. Tickets should be valued at one cent; be sure to have them personalized with the name of your location.

Q: How much merchandise do I need to start my redemption center?

A: The merchandise should satisfy all age groups. The mix should consist of low-end, middle, and high-end items. The more versatile, the better. Merchandise companies offer what is called a Starter Kit.

Q: How do you determine the selling price of the merchandise?

A: The selling price of the merchadise should be the true cost. True cost is the cost of an item plus taes and freight, if any. Your profits are from the redemption equipment played, not your redemption counter. Winning merchandise is why your customers play.

Q: What is the cost of a redemption game?

A: Redemption games come in various price ranges—anywhere from $3,200 to $22,000.

Q: How much space is needed for redemption machines?

A: Allow about 50 square feet per station. This will allow for aisle room and a redemption center.

Q: How many tickets should my redemption machines give out?

A: A redemption game should give out about 25 percent to 35 percent of the value to play the game. Example: a customer plays four games (value $1); the average redemption game should pay out 25 to 35 tickets.

Q: Should I monitor ticket payouts?

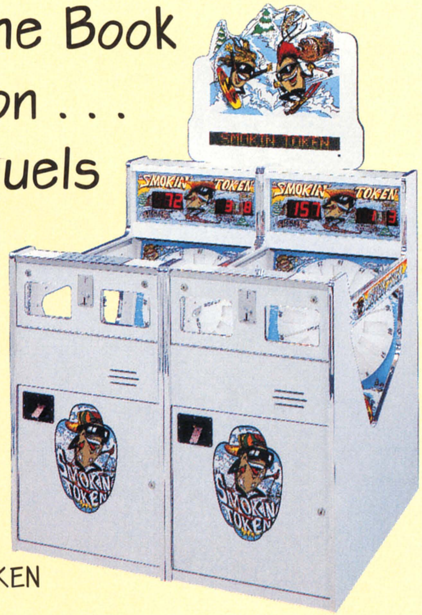
A: It is extremely important to monitor the ticket payout. If the payout is too low, your customers will not play the game. If too high, you are giving too much away. Both ways, you lose. Be a winner, monitor the ticket payout. ▲

Thanks to Betson Enterprises of Carlstadt, N.J., for supplying these valuable basics of redemption.

Photo courtesy of Chuck and Jane Jones of Fun Challenge in Christiansburg, Va.

Seidel Wrote the Book on Redemption . . . and the Sequels Keep Rolling Out!

HI-LO LXI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TAKING PRIDE *in your* REDEMPTION OPERATION

Something

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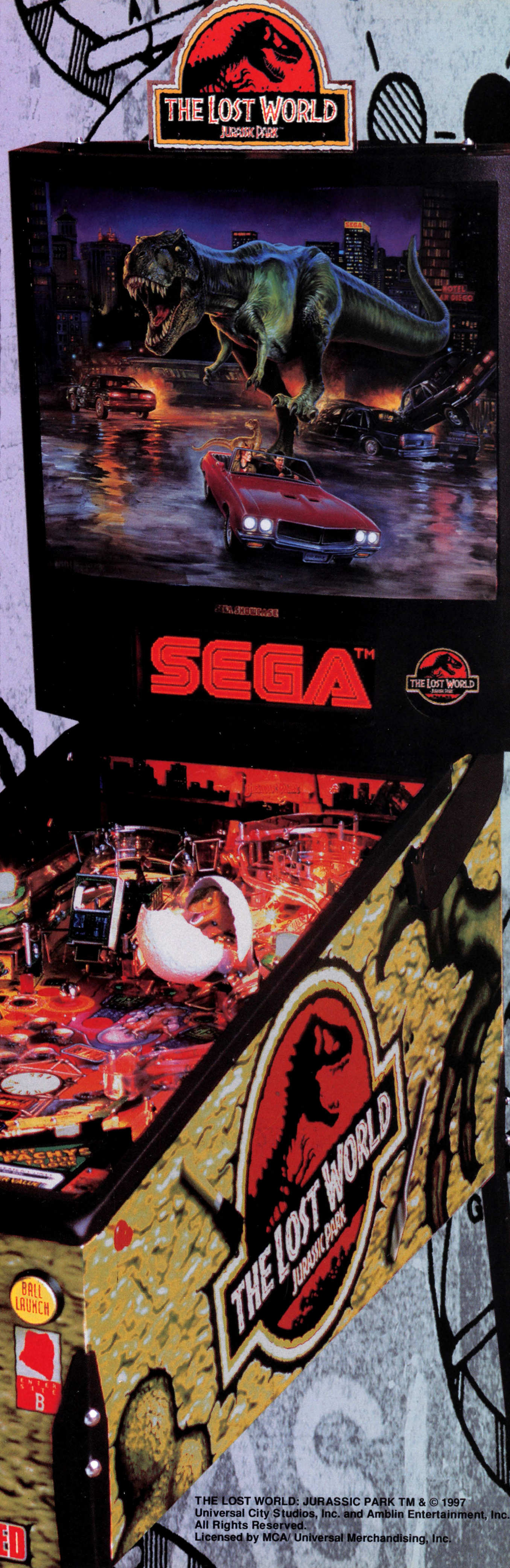
Survived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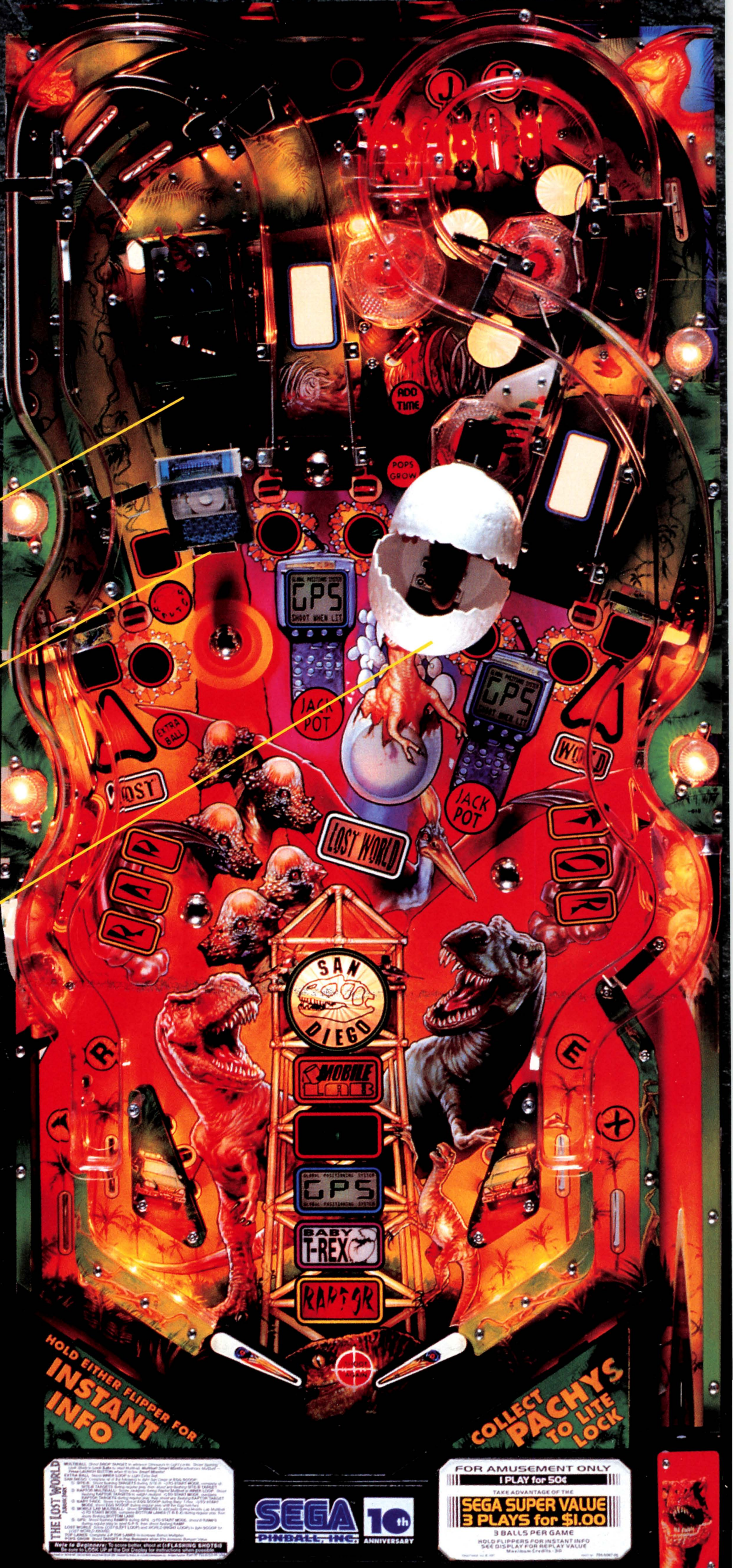
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E.T. LAND
E.T. LAND

Mike Farrington and Jack Kelly
NANCO
Chelsea, MA

HOT ITEMS: Alien merchandise. Nanco has five items in the novelty and key chain group and 10 items in the plush category, two of which are build-ups available in eight sizes.

Nanco also has 58 standard items in six categories. They include sunglasses (adult and child neon, aviator, and racing); balls (hi-bounce ball, hacky sacks, four-inch assortment in baseball, football, basketball, and soccer); waterguns (various designs and shapes and power shooters); tattoos; girl's jewelry; and bugs (the bigger and more disgusting the better).

The company also has a line of generic items that includes fans, gliders, whoopee cushions, kaleidoscopes, magic springs, key chains, yo-yos, jump ropes, card games, die cast cars, gory teeth, and mini locks to name only a few.

THE MARKET

The redemption market as a whole is doing well. The surge of business between 1989 and 1996 has somewhat stabilized and is now growing at a slower pace. I believe that fluctuations in the job market–downsizing specifically–and families relocating due to job opportunities, moving to warmer climates, and the El Nino weather effect have caused the market to stabilize.

TIPS FOR OPERATORS

A redemption display must be full at all times, well lighted, have easy access with plenty of space for customers redeeming items and have a wide variety of items that will appeal to various age groups and sexes. The brighter the colors in your display, the better.

The counter must be attended by friendly employees who understand how a customer, no matter what age, must be treated. And though it should go without saying, your entire location should be spotlessly clean, especially the redemption counter. And make sure the lighting is sufficient.

The items you choose for your redemption counter should be evergreen (standard), generic items with broad based appeal from slum, toy, novelty, and plush categories, licensed items (sports and characters), electronics, and any items that may be unique in your area.

PURCHASING MERCHANDISE

How you buy your crane merchandise depends on how many you operate. What is the magic number? I would say that if you operate more than 25 cranes, buying bulk may save you money and give you a better selection.

A pre-pack will give you the variety and price point you need but you have no control over what you receive. However, using several vendors and giving the lions share to the vendor who gives you the best variety may help.

Buying bulk allows you to choose the items, but to stay competitive you must buy by the case. This will give you less variety unless you have the money to purchase 100 cases of merchandise, the room to store them, and the employees to make up the mix. Either way, pre-packs or bulk, if you find a hot item buy a case and mix a few with each bag/box you put in your crane.

WHAT YOU NEED

Here are a few questions to ask yourself before purchasing merchandise for your counter:

1. What are your tickets worth? Remember that you're not trying to make a big profit on the prizes; you're making the profit on your games. Figure in your overhead cost–use the factor you've built in for everything else. If you pay 69 cents for an item and your overhead is 10 percent, figure to redeem that prize for 75 tickets if the tickets are worth a penny. Don't get greedy. If you're setting prices that are more than the wholesale cost and a reasonable overhead, your customers will figure it out real soon.

2. Consider which type of redemption games you have. Basically, there are two types: games your customers will play to win prizes and the kind they'll play simply to have fun. On a game like Skee-Ball you can give fewer tickets. But on games with little action, your customers will expect more tickets.

3. What is the average age of your customer?

4. How much space will you devote to your redemption counter? It should be directly related to how many redemption games you have. Obviously if you only have a handful of redemption games you are going to devote less space than if you have a larger number. Here's an example: most people who open have between 25 and 30 redemption games, allow about 20 square feet of redemption space including the counter space and the backwall, which should be slat wall so you can hang merchandise, shelves, etc.

5. What kind of counter should you have? Cases should be glass on all sides including the sliding back doors.

6. How will I display my merchandise? You should follow the same rules a retail establishment follows.

7. What kind of crowd do I attract? If you are dealing with a hometown crowd your merchandise must change more often than if you are a resort or seasonal location.

8. Should I hang larger items around the store? Think security because theft will occur more readily than you may realize.

9. Who should I ask for advice? Talk with the merchandise supplier; he has experience. He will have plans for various amounts of space.

Rorie Keller
Play-By-Play/Ace-Acme
Los Angeles, CA

HOT ITEMS: Looney Tunes pumpkins. For the fall, Play-By-Play/Ace-Acme will be offering the four most popular characters popping out of pumpkins. They'll come in two sizes for redemption and cranes. There will also be Christmas items featuring Taz, Tweety Bird, Bugs, and Sylvester.

The company also has attained the rights to the Batman & Robin plush items, including the Bat villains, Mr. Freeze and Poison Ivy, from the upcoming episode as well as four others from previous episodes. There is also the Batman doll with a PVC roto-cast head for redemption and cranes, an assortment of vinyl flip flop stick ups profiling Batman & Robin, six villains, and the Bat logo. Also the Batman playface. All will be available in $1.25 average and $2.50 average Batman packs.

There is also an extensive line of plush like Peanut the elephant, Rocky the ape, Patches the panda, Toby the tiger, Slither the snake, Abner the dinosaur, Doda the bird, Rowdy the St. Bernard, Sparky the dalmatian, Dimples the cow, and Dumpling the pig to name only a few. In addition, there's a catalog stuffed with generic items to address every need.

THE MARKET

My customers, the fun center operators are telling me they are raising their percentage of mark-up now more than they ever did in the past to compensate for the high payout rate of tickets with the new games. They report that it hasn't hurt their business at all and it is very necessary in order to turn a profit. With the percentage of payout back to the player in the 40 percent to 50 percent range rather than the previous 20 percent to 35 percent range, they have to mark up to cover costs.

As a supplier to the redemption centers, we are constantly keeping on top of new trends in the marketplace, adding new fad items, and constantly updating our licensed product line to keep it fresh.

Some say redemption is redemption, who cares about the prizes, the games are what is important. Well, I say redemption is redemption and the prizes are still important to even the best games. What has changed is the player. The player is now more sophisticated about redemption. And the games are more sophisticated, too.

Back with Skee-Ball it was just about the only game in town, and with a relatively low ticket payout, prize selection didn't have to be very broad. Because of the time it would take to build up a substantial number of tickets to redeem for anything large, 500 to 1,000 ticket items were the exception rather than the norm in a redemption prize counter. Now, however, with game like Cyclone, Wheel 'M In, Dinoscore, to name a few, players are racking up piles of tickets in just one visit to a fun center.

Now those 500 or 1,000 ticket prizes can be found in abundance in a redemption prize display and it's more important than ever to offer a wide range of prizes in all ticket values. In one visit a player in 1997 can easily win up to 500 tickets, maybe even more. They may choose to redeem those during that visit so you must have a lot to offer them for the money they just spent in your games.

With 300 to 500 tickets, the winner may want just one great item or a few medium range items at 50 to 150 tickets each. For the player who prefers to save his tickets, you still have to give him a reason to come back. Therefore, you need more of those 1,000- and up-ticket items than were necessary just a few years ago.

The low-ticket prizes, one to 25 tickets, are still popular with the younger crowd and, therefore, still important for you to stock in your counter. Just this week, for example, I was visiting a location and watched two little girls, probably about six or seven years old, each with just under 200 tickets trying to decide what they wanted. After about 20 minutes they ran off with their pockets bulging with small toys and candy, not one item they chose was worth over 20 tickets.

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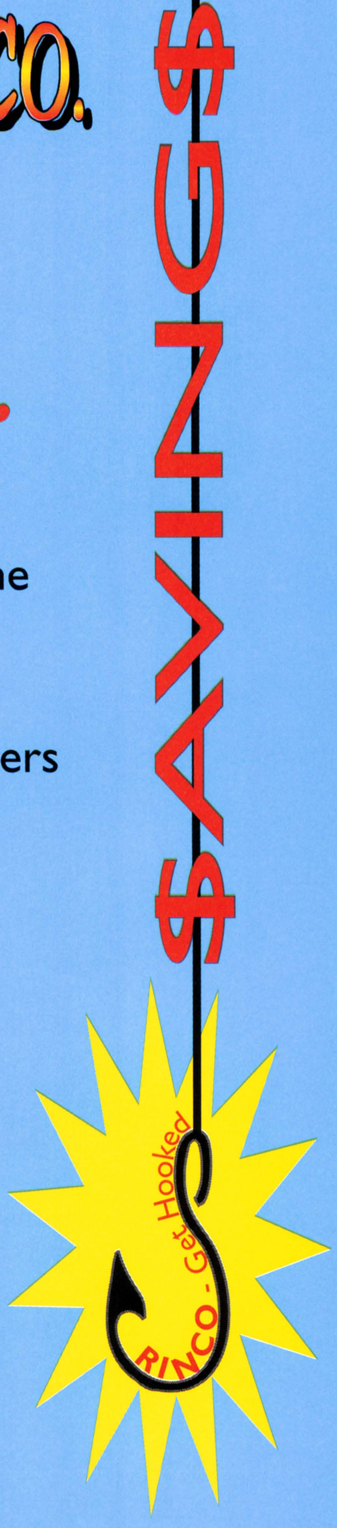

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Sondra Doyle
Oriental Trading Co.
Omaha, NE

HOT ITEMS: Oriental is now offering soft plush families in five different sizes. The new additions are black bears, smiley faces, dalmatians, and the yellow happy babies.

Oriental has a long, long list of hot items which can be found in its newest 51-page catalog. Bean bag animals are hot, hot, hot and the company if offering 20 different styles. It's also preparing for the dinosaur craze surfacing again with the release of "Lost World," with realistic dinosaur merchandise including large banks, hand puppets, squirts, notepads, finger puppets, and paddle games.

Oriental also stocks what it calls "basic redemption necessities," which includes more than six million balls it inventories and the basic whoopee cushion.

THE MARKET

We suggest to customers that they "think retail" when merchandising their redemption counters and back wall displays. One crucial element that we feel is important is using acrylic bins so that product can be seen. Don't hide the product or make your customers guess what's in the showcase. They need to see what they have an opportunity to win.

Prizes are your customersí incentive to putting more money in your cashboxes.

REDEMPTION TIPS

1. Make sure everything is organized, clean, and labeled.
2. Put bins into the showcases, put larger ticket items like electronics on your back wall shelving.
3. Make sure there is plenty of light on the wall and in your showcases.
4. If possible incorporate mirrors in the back of your showcases.
5. Take signage very seriously. It's as important as cleanliness.
6. Make your entire center inviting to parents as well as children. You spent a lot of money getting them there the first time, now protect that investment and get the return business.

WHAT YOU NEED

Operators looking to improve or begin their redemption business should work with a company specializing in redemption merchandise. Oriental, for example, looks at itself as a partner with our customers. We believe that our customers who have worked so long and hard for their success will still be here in the next millennium, said Doyle.

Oriental offers a redemption starter kit which average 50 different items: 5,600 pieces and sells for $595. The company also offers other necessary components like acrylic bins and ticket value cards. ▲

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Prizes
Prizes

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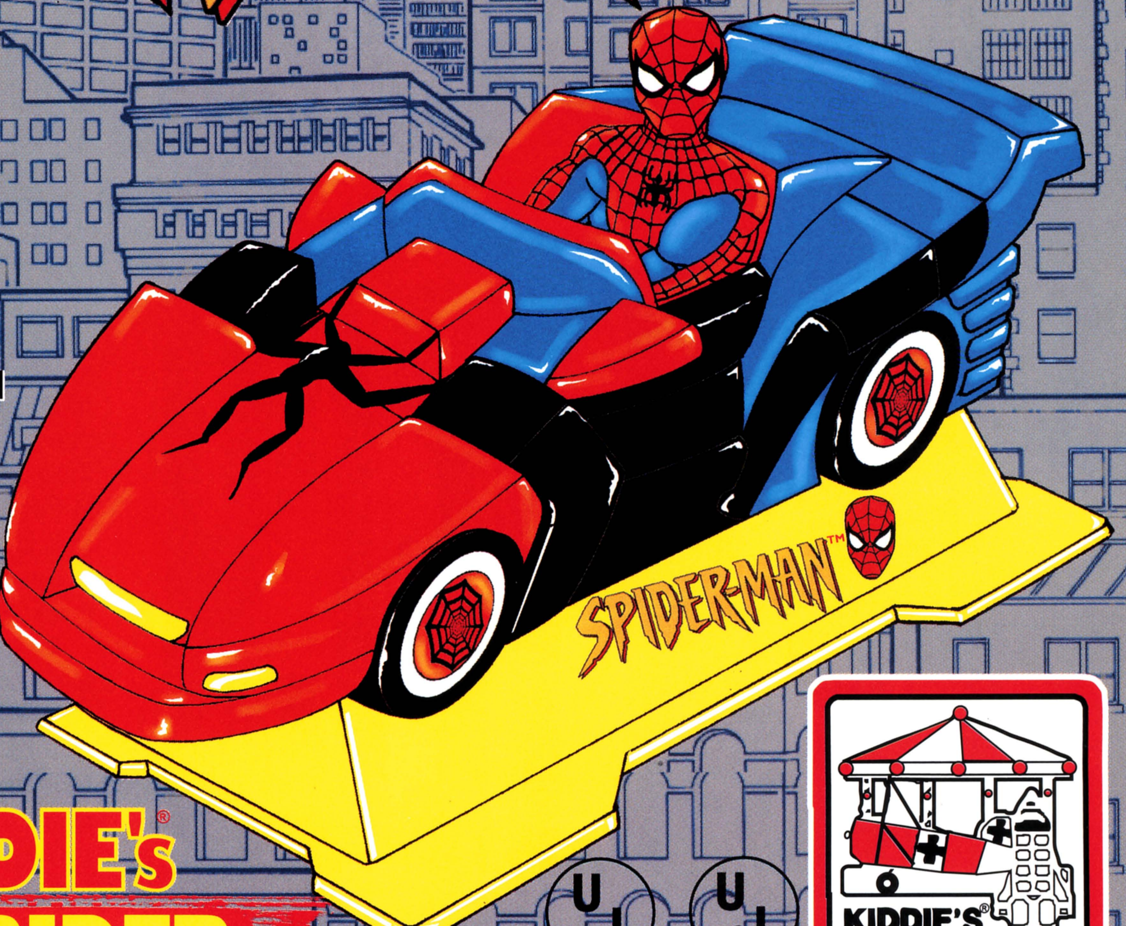

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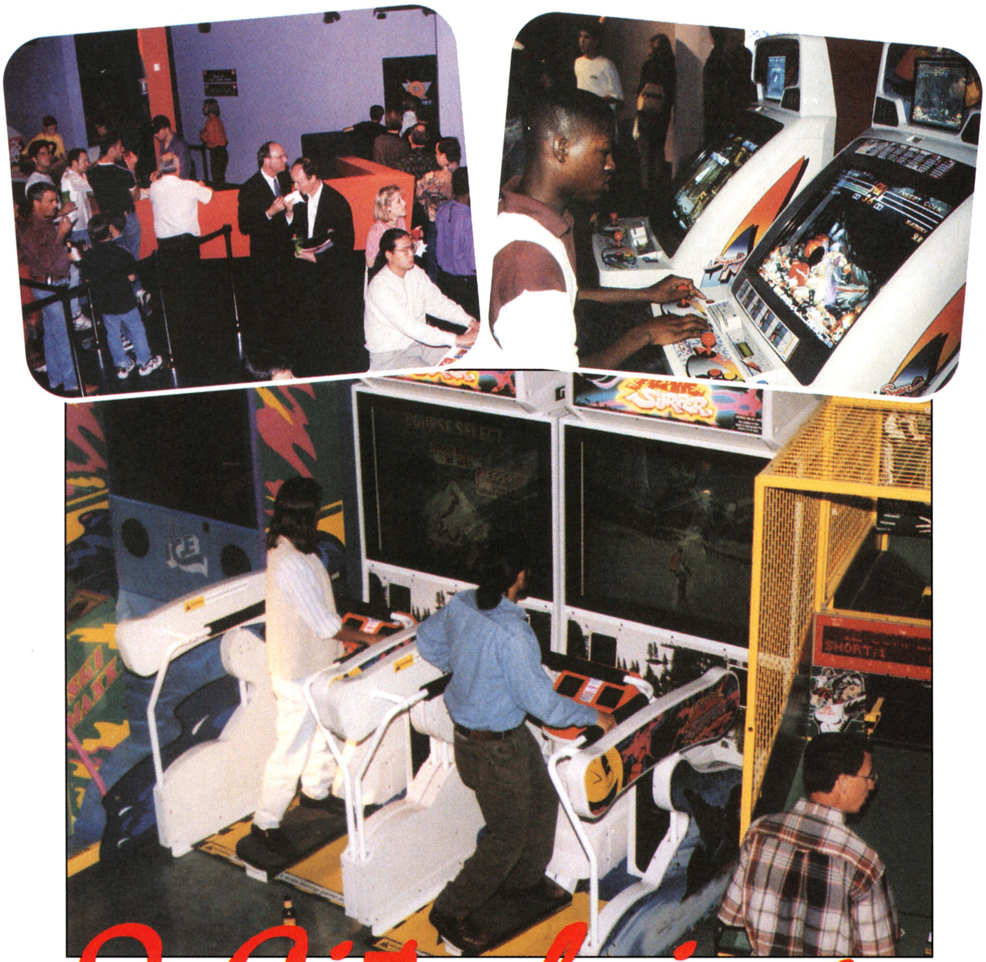

Q-City brings HIGH TECH ENTERTAINMENT TO TEXAS

The entertainment mall of tomorrow has already arrived with the opening this spring of Q-City, a 50,000-square-foot high-tech entertainment center housing a wide selection of interactive, state-of-the-art activities that will provide a safe, non-alcohol, smoke-free environment for the teen market.

Laser tag manufacturer and operator Q-Zar, based in Dallas, chose Mesquite, Texas, to unveil the first of what it hopes will be a chain of indoor entertainment facilities. "Q-City is specifically designed to appeal to Generation 2000," says Tom Butler, CEO of Q-Zar. "This teen and young adult market has been greatly ignored by the entertainment industry as a whole. Q-City will fill the gap that exists for a safe, fun, social environment providing the latest immersive entertainment experience."

In addition to interactive entertainment, Q-City offers retail shopping on its second-level Boardwalk with forward driven fashions from Extreme Clothing & Sports; high-tech sporting goods and equipment such as in-line skates, skateboards, and snowboards; and accessories including watches, key chains, jewelry, and sunglasses.

Mesquite Marvels

Whether a fast-paced, music-laced game of laser tag is right up your alley, or you're in search of a good old-fashioned game of pool, Q-City in Mesquite, Texas, is the place to go. Here's a look at the lineup of attractions:

Q-Zar Quarter: Two teams of up to 30 players each can suit up and compete in the futuristic arena.

Metro Bowl: Offering 18 lanes that are coated in ultra-violet, shrouded in fog, and lit by flashing laser light.

SimEx Virtual Voyages: An immersive state-of-the-art simulator experience that can take patrons to the far reaches of outer space and the depths of the world's oceans.

The Stadium: Simulator games with a sports theme include *NBA JAM Extreme, Golden Tee 3-D Golf, Cyber Cycles*, and *Alpine Racer 2*.

Downtown and Uptown Pool Hall: Unlike the smoky halls of yesterday, Q-City presents pool in a bright high-tech teen environment.

City Museum: Classic video games abound including *Pac-Man* and *Space Invaders*.

No city would be complete without eateries, and Q-City has three: the Buzz Diner, Pizza Plaza from Pizza Inn, and Cafe Central featuring Moxie Java Coffee including expresso, cappuccino, and gourmet coffees. The Buzz Diner is a fully interactive establishment featuring touch screen interaction for playing video and music clips and creating your own dishes along with a full-service menu.

Music pumps throughout the location from the Radio City Tower, which is on all day playing the hottest music and beaming up-to-the-minute information on activities in the center. A 50-screen video wall reflects popular selections from the in-house DJ and VJ.

With the introduction of Q-City, Q-Zar says it has created the perfect place to chill out and have a good time creating a custom adventure, enjoying a cup of java, or buying the latest in fashions. ▲

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4th Annual Family Fun Edition

VALERIE COGNEVICH

COINMAN INTERVIEW: Dave CORRIVEAU

When Dave Corriveau of Dave & Buster's agreed to this interview, I knew that it would be one of probably thousands he's done. In fact, I had quite a few of them in front of me at the time. Just about everyone in our industry knows the name Dave & Buster's. (Except, perhaps, the secretary in a letter I received who typed "David Buster" in a reference!)

How well-known is it? How many times have you heard "a Dave & Buster's-like place?" I wanted to know more than what I had read, but I wasn't sure if there was more. I was wrong. What I found was someone who is happy, really happy doing what he does. You can just picture him sitting at the bar at one of the Dave & Buster's partying hearty right along with his guests. And sincerely enjoying himself, while the eyes in the back of his head take in every little detail.

Dave chuckles when he talks of things from the early days, like being kicked out of banks! He admits that not everything he and Buster wanted to do worked, but they never gave up and always focused on the positive. Dave certainly didn't have his success handed to him on a silver platter; I think that's what I liked best. He appreciates what he struggled to get, yet has an uncanny understanding that he hasn't reached a final destination. He's on a trip that doesn't end, it seems to only get better. And Dave, as well as his business, continues to evolve. I think you'll like reading what he has to say.

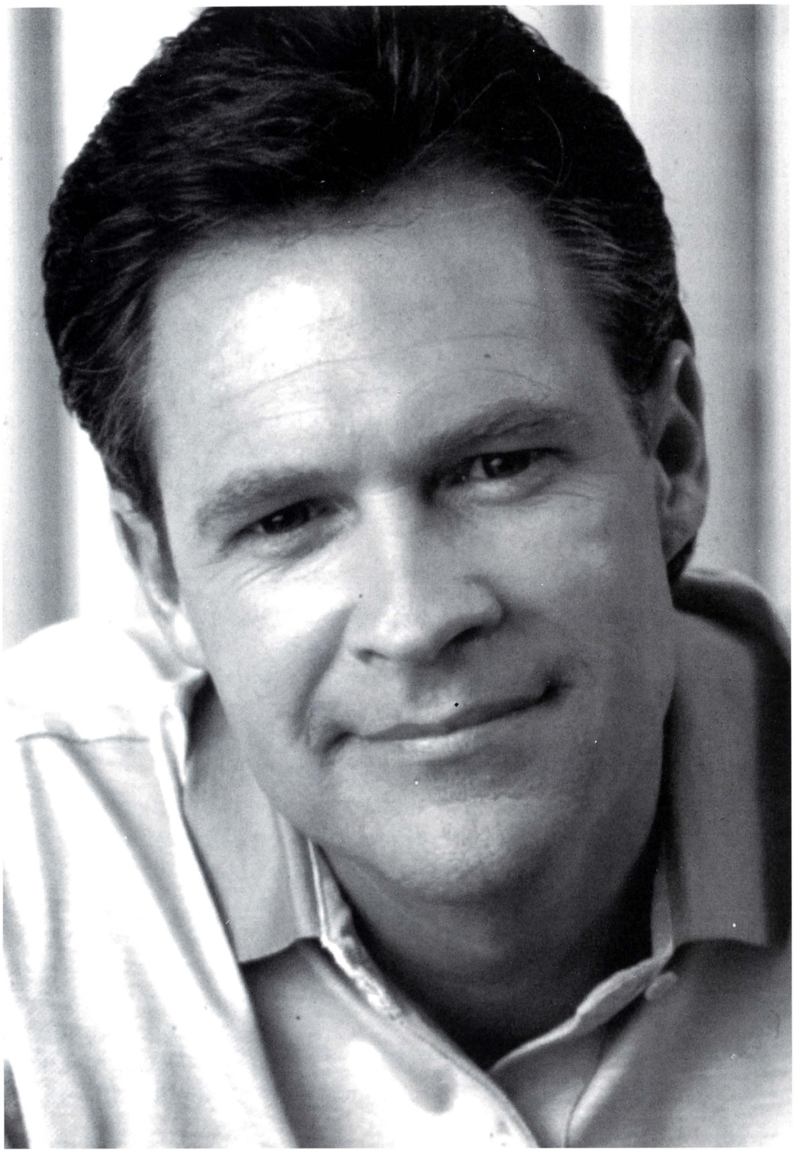
Could you tell us about your years before Dave & Buster's?

My first business, when I was 19, was sno cones. Let's just say it was a disaster, but I learned some lessons I use to this day. Then I opened Cash McCools in a 2,500-square-foot former Pizza Inn in Little Rock, Ark. My next place, Slick Willy's, opened in Jan. 1976, in an old train station in Little Rock. It was 10,000 square feet with more pool tables, miniature golf, shuffleboard, and a game room with video games, very new at the time. The atmosphere was adult-oriented with a big screen TV, beer, wine, popcorn, and hot dogs. And those folks loved playing.

What experience did you have that led you to open an adult-oriented place?

My research was in Las Vegas, although I didn't really call it research at

Dave Corriveau (l) and Buster Corley, co-founders of Dave & Buster's.



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the time! I was young and thought Las Vegas sounded so exciting. After dealing blackjack for six months I was bored and felt like nothing more than a robot.

After returning to Arkansas, I worked as a waiter at Steak N' Ale long enough for me to realize that I was being drawn back to Las Vegas. This time I worked as a room service waiter on the graveyard shift, so I had a lot of time on my hands, a lot of time to think. I realized that what I loved about Las Vegas was the atmosphere and the excitement of adults having fun in what was basically an adult playground.

I began to have visions of opening a place that had the feel, action, and energy of a casino, but would be legal somewhere outside of Las Vegas. This is what led to Cash McCool's. Adults had their own place where they could party, play games, and have fun.

How did Slick Willy's evolve?

I saw my customers having so much fun that I decided to give them even more to do and opened Slick Willy's, which was named after the famous pool player, Willie Mosconi. It was 10,000 square feet and really took off. About that time the general manager of the local TGIFriday's, Buster Corley, came to the train station looking for a location to build a full-service restaurant and bar. We became business partners, and he opened his 6,000-square-foot Buster's restaurant right next door to Slick Willy's.

When did you decide to combine the two businesses into one?

We were amazed at the traffic between the two and the seed was set. Not only did people like to eat and drink but they liked to play games too. If you think of the essence of a Las Vegas casino, that's what we wanted under one roof. In 1978 we began to formulate our plan. We couldn't do it with our existing locations because the arcane laws in Arkansas would not allow a full bar and billiards in the same room. We knew that to do what we wanted to do would require doing it somewhere else.

Buster and I began drawing plans, speculating on the layouts, doing prep work, and discussing all aspects of this idea even though we didn't know how we would pull it off. We had a great idea, but guess what, no money!

What was the turning point in going ahead with your plans?

In the summer of 1979 I received an offer to sell Slick Willy's. I jumped at the $400,000 offer since I only had about $10,000 in it. We kept Buster's figuring we'd need a place to make our plans, and we needed some kind of business so we wouldn't starve. We decided to use the $400,000 as seed money, as a down payment to get the new idea—we hadn't even come up with a name yet—off the ground.

We didn't have any idea what we were doing. Buster and I were kicked out of more banks than most people probably have ever even been in. We had $400,000 but what we had in mind would take $4 million.

Did you hire a consultant to help you decide where to go from there?

We didn't have enough sense to hire one. We were flying by the seat of our pants. Remember, we're from Arkansas! We didn't do one demographic count or any of the other things you need to properly research a business location or develop a business plan. We do a lot of research and analysis today, but back then you might say we were more lucky than smart!

We decided to look for a location near a lot of restaurants. We visited dozens of cities and just couldn't find what we were looking for. We felt that if we could just find the right location, it would be smooth sailing from there. Although we had already searched in Dallas, we went back in 1981 and found what we thought was the perfect place.

It was a warehouse, with a huge parking lot nearby, at the end of a road that had a number of restaurants. Even though it was two blocks off the freeway, we felt it was the place we were looking for.

So now we had our idea, the location, and our seed money. We personally guaranteed every penny. In other words, we were betting the farm on this idea. An attorney in Little Rock, who was an expert in limited partnerships, helped us get the first Dave & Buster's open.

Were there times in the process of getting kicked out of banks and not being able to find the right location that you felt like throwing in the towel on the idea?

It took us two years to put the deal together. Every time someone slammed the door in our face, we'd go have a drink and start talking even more about our plans. We refused to dwell on anything negative. This "extra time" allowed us—or maybe forced is a better word—to focus on even the smallest detail. We detailed every inch of the store in our minds and then put it down on paper. If you think about something for two years, you really think it through.

I heard once that sometimes a person may have a view of the grand scheme of things but overlook the details. Do you agree?

I'd go so far as to say that in 1980 when I sold Slick Willy's if someone would have given us the money to open our place, it would not have been the same and we probably wouldn't be doing this interview. Buster and I talked about it, thought about it, redrew it so often that every detail was worked out. We didn't take anything for granted. We really used the two years to our advantage. Easy to say now, 15 years later!

Willie Mosconi was the inspiration behind Slick Willy's

But those two years were the most frustrating and excruciating two years I've ever had. Here we were, two guys 28 and 29 years old with a successful business back in Arkansas, so we weren't going to starve to

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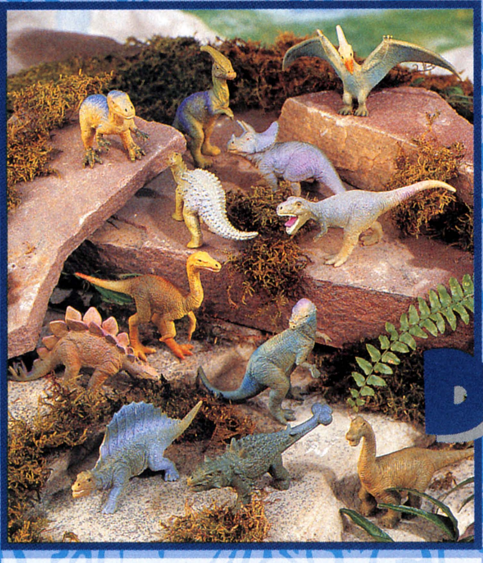
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death. We were swinging for the fences.

Was the industry different when you opened the first Dave & Buster's?

Yes, it was definitely different. In 1982 the amusement business was coming off its one-game-a-week syndrome when it was impossible to keep up with the latest games.

Two major things have happened between 1982 and now: redemption and the big simulators, which is our business in 1997. It's a great difference.

Do people looking to get into the business today have any advantages or disadvantages that you didn't have 15 years ago?

A disadvantage would be that the market is more defined and more mature. You are not breaking new ground. Any time you break new ground like we did, you become pioneers. There are lumps you have to take, but at least you're the only game in town.

On the advantage side, newcomers can look at what successful operators are doing. You can learn from other's mistakes. Sure you have more competition, but at least you can observe what works and what doesn't. We had to invent everything ourselves. It almost led to our downfall and that's why it was so hard to get Dave & Buster's off the ground.

Even though we had thought the whole thing through, once it was launched it wasn't exactly like we thought it would be.

Can you recall anything you did that just didn't work?

Here's the first thing that failed: we had our bigger areas, like the billiard table and shuffleboard areas, wired up to a switchboard allowing customers to place food or beverage orders over the telephone. It was a total disaster. We ripped it out the first week. We made so many mistakes it was unbelievable.

What were some of them?

It's so painful to talk about, let's see! When we opened we thought that if we had a big party it would be enough promotion. After all, if you opened a place as big as ours in Little Rock, the whole city would stand up and take notice, and you'd be off to a great start.

Well, we opened in Dallas and nobody came! We soon realized we'd made a mistake by not promoting the business on the front end. That mistake almost cost us our life. Times were very lean. For example, we had trained our people, hired great bartenders and wait staff, and had no business. No business is no money for the staff since they depend on tips. One of Buster's and my jobs the first week was to stuff $10 bills into the tip jars so these people would stay with us until we turned the corner.

But you didn't give up. What did you do?

We did two things, that is after we determined what we could do on credit. Remember we had only been open two weeks and we were already out of money. It was scary.

Anyway, we bought a 100-foot flagpole and a huge

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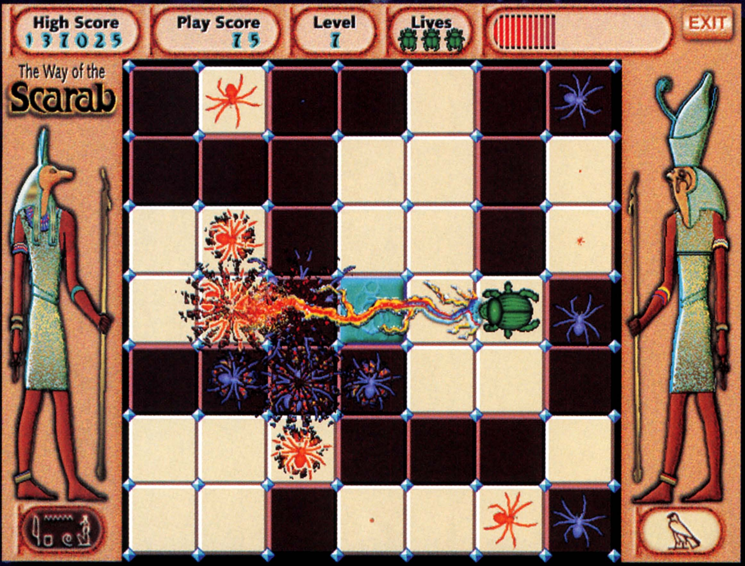
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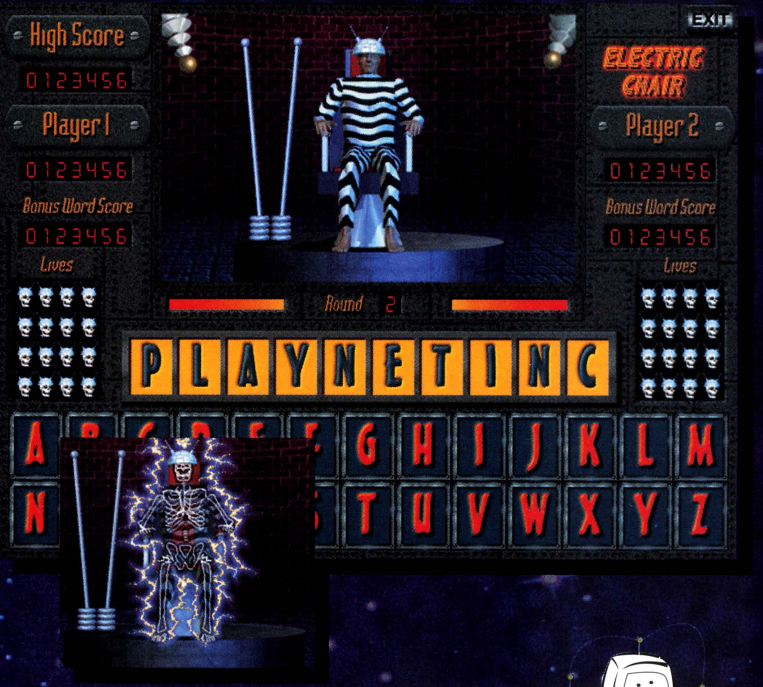
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Player 1
0123456
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0123456
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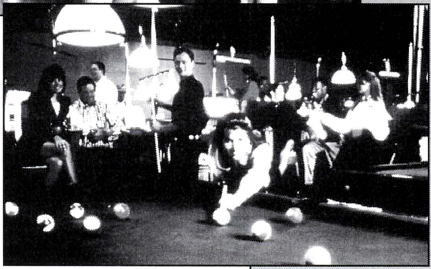
American flag for identification. We wanted to be seen from the freeway. In the back of our minds we were thinking that it would have been almost un-American for anyone to repossess an American flag in case it didn't work!

We found we could also purchase radio time on credit and we used that time to tell everyone what we were all about and how much fun they'd have at Dave & Buster's. It worked. People started to come, then more people started to come, and things got better. Then they got much better and the rest, they say, is history!

It's hard to believe that a place as famous as Dave & Buster's faced some of the same problems that others have in getting off the ground.



Oh, we had problems. My hat is off to anyone who can come into the market today and open a place like Dave & Buster's. I think you'd be surprised to know just how hard Buster and I worked to make this happen. We were amazed at the devotion and commitment it took then and still does today.

Now we have operation directors, a human resource department, and other corporate staff. We're generating over $120 million in annual sales, and yet not a day goes by that we aren't having to solve problems, raise hell here and there, trying to make it work even better, and keep improving the business.

My point, and I can't stress it enough, is that no matter what kind of place you create and open you must keep evolving. If you start a place from ground zero, to make it work, I'd underline "make it work" because it is not an easy task, you must be prepared. It will never be an easy task and to be successful you must have a lot of energy, nerves, and persistence.

What sort of advice would you give someone coming into the business today?

I'm a big believer in creating your own niche. Back in 1975 I created Cash McCool's as my idea of the rebirth of the great American pub. You must have an edge and a niche to blaze new trails. There's always a new trail because everything evolves. With evolution comes opportunities.

Some places have opened with great fanfare and closed soon after. Is there one striking reason?

Not only do you need the finances to open, you must be able to run the operation. Like I said before, it is hard work, and that's probably the one thing some people don't count on or figure into their plans. The hardest part is running the business. You could build Taj Mahals all day long and throw money at problems, but if you don't have the operational know-how to make it hum and be profitable, you won't stay on the track very long.

"There's no place quite like it!"

If you don't enjoy your visit to Dave & Buster's, then stay home next time and defrost the 'fridge or clip your toenails because you're just not into fun! Here are some facts gleaned from Dave & Buster's promotional material.

Number of locations: There are 11 locations in Dallas, Houston, Atlanta, Philadelphia, Chicago, Florida, Maryland, California, and the newest and first international store in Birmingham, England. In 1998 and 1999 eight more stores will open. Plans call for 50 to 60 domestic locations.

Concept: The ultimate place for "big kids" to play. There's quality food in big portions in an upscale, hand-crafted, dark wood atmosphere paired with as much fun as you can pack into anywhere from 50,000 to 70,000 square feet.

Menu: Lunch, dinner, and late night, eclectic contemporary American fare. Prices range from $6.50 to $16.95. Here's a sample from the menu: spinach and artichoke dip, gourmet pizza, cowboy steak, grilled mahi-mahi, chicken and Shiite mushrooms with penne pasta, walnut hill sundae, mile high chocolate cake with chocolate sauce, and white chocolate raspberry truffle cheesecake.

Annual visitors: More than a million per store.

Annual sales: $12 million average per store (34% from food, 20% from beverage, and 46% from amusements).

Stock: Dave & Buster's went public in June 1995 (NASDAQ:DANB)

Target market: adults between 21 and 44.

Visitor profile: 60% male; active, affluent, entertainment driven; drive an average of 22 minutes to come out and play; average household income of $61,000; average stay of two hours; visit an average of 10 times per year; spend an average of $17.50 per visit.

The fun: iWERKS turbo ride theater; The Million Dollar Midway with the latest electronic interactive attractions and high-tech simulators as well as traditional favorites; world class pocket billiard tables (hand-crafted to recreate an original billiard classic with solid mahogany and rosewood); champion-style shuffleboard (crafted after a 1933 salesman's model retrieved from American Shuffleboard's attic with the help of Sol Lipkin); The 19th Hole, a full-swing, state-of-the-art golf simulator; The Viewpoint Bar and Video Dome, a four-sided classic bar with a view of the whole joint and 20 televisions wrapped around the center; The showroom, a multi-level special events theater featuring Murder Mystery dinners and corporate and private parties; the D&B Casino, with play-for-fun blackjack for high stakes fun on a no-risk table; D&B Lanes for the timeless classic thrill of bowling; and virtual world outpost, where the interdimensional traveler will feel right at home in an amazing digital theme environment. ▲

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The wheels will come off and rarely will you have a second chance. You have to close shop. It's unfortunate, but it's not unique to this business. You can have great ideas, you can get the financing, you can draw up a great physical plan. But if you aren't willing or able to do all the things necessary to run your business properly, you'll have to hang it up because it's not gonna happen.

You guys have come a long way and I've heard you attribute much of your success to your employees. Is that true?

I think you attribute loyalty to taking care of your people and having a corporate culture that your employees can thrive in. We've been blessed with the caliber of employees we've had. Some even came from Little Rock with us and are now vice presidents at Dave & Buster's. We've been lucky to have people who have helped us row this boat.

To be completely honest, Buster is the best people-person I've ever met. He's the chief operating officer because he does so well with people and really knows the business. Buster is the best leader of people I have ever known; I have tremendous respect for the man.

I also admire and greatly respect the Dave & Buster's management team that Buster leads. They accomplish the seemingly impossible every day with amazing consistency.

During a seminar at a Fun Expo, it was brought up that a well-known chain was in trouble. One reason cited was that they tried to increase their bottom line by hiring cheaper people. Can your employees really make or break a location?

You better believe it. Making plans must include a plan for hiring the right people. We have 3,000 employees and if it weren't for them the doors would not open. We hear compliments all the time from customers who tell us how welcome they felt and how nice the staff treated them. If you're not hearing compliments, take a harder look at how you are treating your employees. You want them to feel like they are important because they really are your most important asset.

You set a corporate culture and lead by example. You're not there to simply bark out orders, you're there to encourage those you're trusting with your business. You must treat them with respect so they'll feel good about working for you and the recognition they get. You should do everything you can to let them know how much you appreciate what they are doing.

Do you have a secret formula for buying equipment?

Our formula is simple: we only buy games that appeal to people over 21. That's why we don't have a lot of fighting games. About half of our business is redemption. For the amusement business, redemption—if done right—is the hardest job an operator will have in front of him. It's very tough to do it correctly. If you don't devote the time and effort, your redemption business will show it. It shouldn't be an afterthought. ▲

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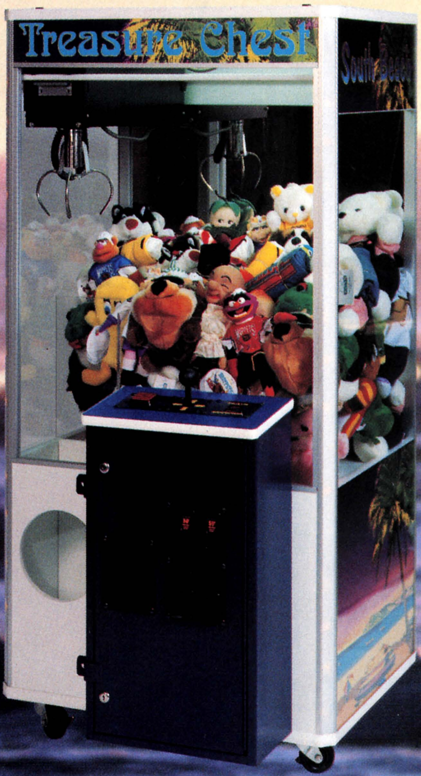
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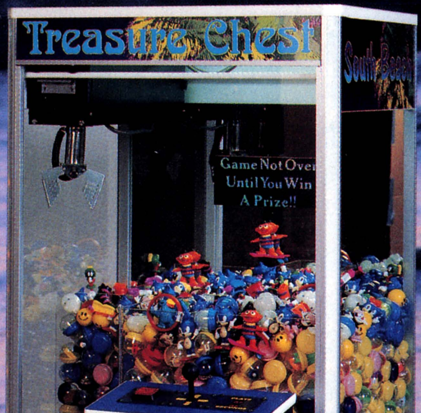
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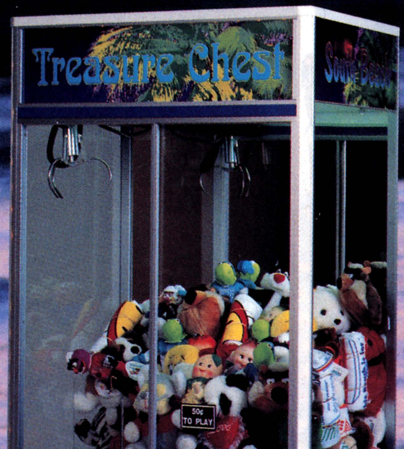
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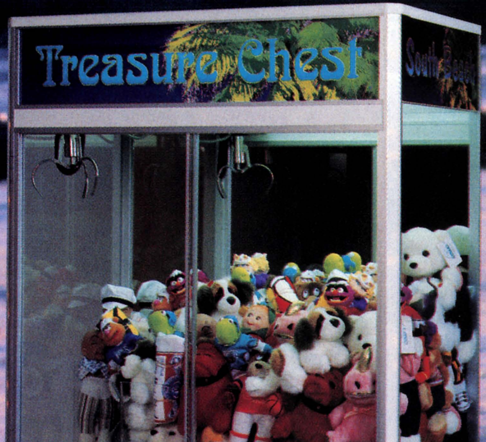
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4th

Annual Family Fun Edition

Run up the good times at HICKORY DICKORY DOCK

Fifty miles northwest of Charlotte, in the foothills of North Carolina, is the town of Hickory, known as the furniture capital of the country. While famous for turning out quality home furnishings, the city needed more family entertainment venues. A group of 10 friends and business associates decided to pool their resources and change the situation.

After two years of extensive research and pre-development fine-tuning Hickory Dickory Dock family fun center opened June 24, 1996. Poised to celebrate its first year of operation, the center is a friend to the community as well as a place where families can relax and have a good time.

"The purpose of our facility is to get back to families enjoying themselves together instead of each one going on individual excursions," says Richard Rozzelle, one of the original 10 founders. "We encourage parents to be here with their children. We want it to be a family place. There are no alcoholic beverages sold here. It's very family-oriented." The center even hosted a prom in April with parents as chaperones.

According to marketing director Anne Whisnant, "We try to work closely with the community. For example, we participate in the Terrific Kids program that awards free passes to the center for students who exhibit good citizenship as well as academic excellence." Day care centers and high schools come by to see what the facility has to offer.

ATTRACTIONS

Hickory Dickory Dock is an indoor 34,000-square-foot center that's open all year. Here's what's inside: nine holes of miniature golf, a three-level soft modular play area (by Omni) with 26 movable stations, a quiet room for parents, 13 bumper cars, over 2,500 square feet of laser tag for younger patrons as well as over 4,000 square feet of laser tag for the over-12 crowd, video and redemption games, and a well-stocked prize counter. That's a far cry from the single skating rink that existed in the city before the new center opened.

And don't forget the restaurant, a 120-seat dining room with full lunch and dinner menus featuring honey roasted turkey, spaghetti, sandwiches, hot and cold salads, soups, specialty coffees, desserts (check out the New York cheesecake), banana splits, and a lot more.

The restaurant is so popular that local businesses routinely fax lunch orders. The chef, who has 40 years of experience, is known for his fine home-style meals. Rozzelle emphasizes the importance of home cookin': "That's what's called for in the Hickory area."

While the restaurant's menu is extensive, Rozzelle says that pizza is the most popular food item because it's "simple and easy and you get it quickly."

The center draws from the town's citizens (50,000) and five surrounding counties with a combined population of 200,000.

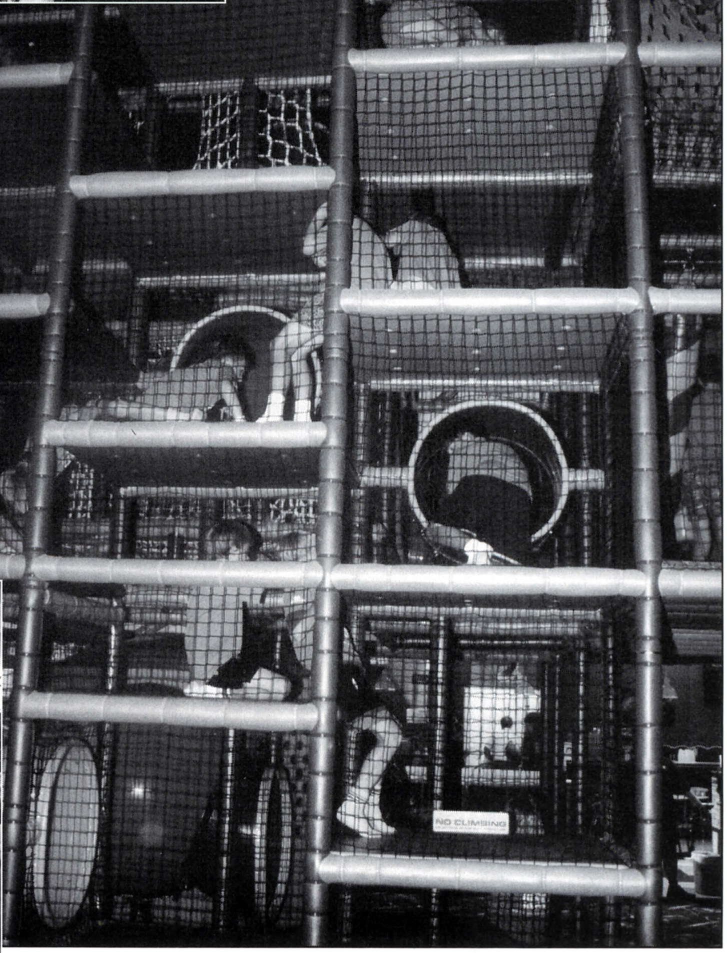
DIVIDING THE FUN

At Hickory Dickory Dock children under 13 must be accompanied by an adult or guardian. Parents with youngsters in the soft modular play area can relax in the quiet room and monitor the children's activities from there.

Recognizing that parents prefer their younger children to be in play environments away from older kids, management divided the center into two main areas for different age groups. "It gives the younger ones something to look forward to," says Rozzelle. "When they get bigger they can play in the other area."

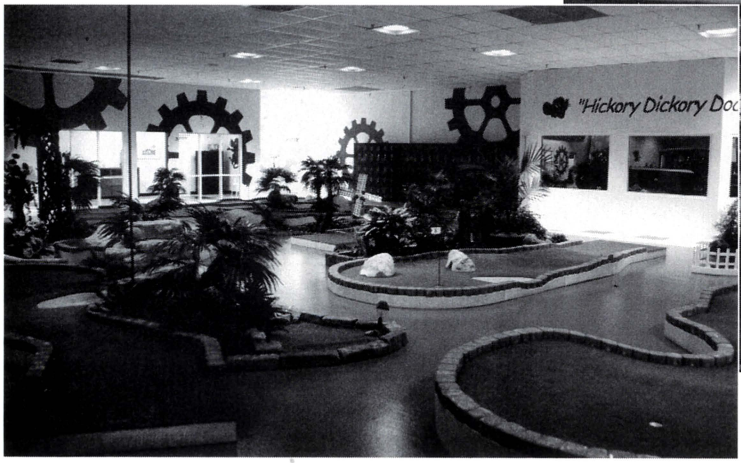
Left: General managers: the husband and wife team of Donna Hesser and Richard Rozzelle.

Below:
Ticker the mascot welcomes young visitors.



Above: Three levels of soft modular play feature 26 movable stations.

Below:
Nine holes of indoor miniature golf; notice the clock gears on the walls.



> **"We wanted to get back to families enjoying themselves together instead of each one going on individual excursions."**

One side has Q tag, soft modular play, bumper cars, redemption games, and the quiet room. The other side has Q-Zar, miniature golf, 50 videos, and the redemption counter.

Prizes at the counter range from plastic cars for one ticket up to remote-control cars for 21,000 tickets. Rozzelle is proud of the counter that spans 120 feet (four sides at 30 ft. each). The most popular items are disappearing ink, dice key chains, blow-up hammers, crayons, radios, walkie-talkies, baseball cards, NASCAR cards, jewelry, and name brand candy such as Tootsie Roll and Jolly Rancher.

THE FUTURE

What's next on the horizon? An expansion of the soft modular play area for starters. Phase 2 also will enlarge the existing party room, which is now 20 feet wide by 70 feet long. Plans include private rooms and added space for small and large meeting rooms.

The corporate office, now in a separate building, will be brought under the main roof. These goals should be achieved by October. Phase 3, for 1998 and beyond, may include two go-kart tracks and possibly water attractions. The center has an option on 40,000 square feet of additional space so the possibilities are limitless.

Two unique features set Hickory Dickory Dock apart from other fun centers:

1. During birthday parties the honored child gets to put his handprint on the wall in primary colors of blue, yellow, or red, complete with the date. This way the child really connects with the location.

2. Ticker the mouse is the center's mascot. His image appears on the walls and a costumed personification runs around interacting with the children. The center has obtained the trademark for the name Hickory Dickory Dock.

The center lives up to its reputation as the amusement and entertainment showplace for western North Carolina.

The three main investors are Marvin Cohen, Nat Kolmes, and Fred DeSanto. Other key people include Rozzelle, Roco DeSanto, Glen Fisher, Donna Hesser, Anne Pritchard, and Katie and Eric Pritchard. The hands-on managing partners are Rozzelle and Hesser. ▲

Hickory Dickory Dock is open all year: 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday to Thursday; 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. Friday and Saturday; and Noon to 8 p.m. Sunday. Attractions are priced separately or families can obtain discounted packages with or without pizza.

Four different party packages are available that combine attractions with party room time. A work force of 70 part- time and full-time employees keep the location humming.

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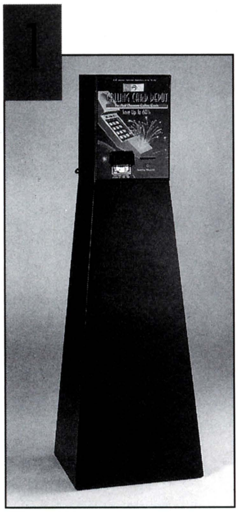
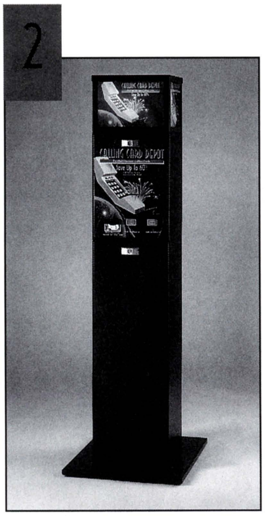


Model 801



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Week 4	$1323	$1136	$849	$1408

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4th Annual Family Fun Edition

OUTSCORE POTENTIAL RISK WITH THE RIGHT INSURANCE

Those words of wisdom spoken by Dick Hall of Automated Batting Cages Corp. at last year's IAAPA family entertainment center roundtable draw into focus the importance of risk management when operating a facility open to the general public.

In fact, a number of the panelists stressed the need to approach potential risks seriously. Harold Skripsky of the Enchanted Castle in Lombard, Ill., said he views safety issues in two categories, controllable and uncontrollable, and has drawn up a detailed crisis management plan to deal with certain potential occurrences.

Unfortunately, the best laid plans are sure to run afoul of the unexpected. The nature of FECs, which feature large amusement attractions and rides, as well as the trend toward litigiousness in our society are sure to produce claims and possible legal action against even the most well-run facility.

> "Lawsuits are like basketball games. Nobody wins 100 to nothing. You've got to score a few baskets to be in the game."

So a second line of defense is needed to stay in the game, as Hall says, and that is a well thought out insurance package. "Assume a lawsuit is waiting for you and take steps now to avoid being on the losing end," says David Smith of Allied Specialty Insurance in Treasure Island, Fla. "Risk management is just one way to avoid being involved in a costly lawsuit. Your insurance provider should be familiar with your particular industry and be able to assist you in devising a proper risk management plan."

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COAST-TO-COAST COVERAGE

THE RIGHT COVERAGE

How do the needs of an FEC differ from that of a white collar corporate office or even a restaurant or retail outlet? One of the main differences is the fact that patrons are inevitably involved in some form of physical activity. This must be taken into consideration when writing an insurance policy.

"Location owners want to make sure there is no exclusion to play activities," explained Mark Nichols of the Markel Insurance Co. in Glenn Allen, Va. "There are policies out there with athletic exclusions."

Michael Beckman of Beckman Insurance said potential risks include everything from loss to property as a result of fire or a natural disaster to loss to a third party through some type of legal action, typically from an injured patron who takes legal action against the park.

"After reviewing the exposure, the insurance professional will then help the park owner develop a risk management plan whereby the park owner avoids some risks such as large mechanical rides and adult rides; assumes some of the risks through self-insurance, deductibles, and retentions; or transfers some of the risk to insurance policies," Beckman said.

Some forms of coverage, according to Beckman, are required, such as workers compensation, and several states mandate businesses buy that coverage from a state regulated fund. This, in fact, can be to a location owner's advantage.

"Many of our go-kart tracks and family fun centers are in the workers compensation state pool," said Beckman. "Because of the seasonal nature of the business, the youthful workers employed, and the possibility of injury have made most of the regular standard insurance companies shy away from this type of workers compensation coverage, the state pool is for those risks that cannot secure coverage from a standard carrier."

While the type of coverage may differ from location to location, a general picture of what is needed can be taken from the comprehensive liability program laid out for FECs by Haas & Wilkerson Insurance in Shawnee Mission, Kan. It includes products liability, personal and advertising liability, fire and legal liability, and medical payments. Other coverages available are property, electronic data processing, crime, an excess liability umbrella, workers compensation, health and life, and business automobile.

Markel's Nichols points out that medical payments can be handled as a provision of the general liability policy or through separate accident/medical coverage, which is handled by experts in the field who can evaluate costs and work closely with a claimant's medical insurance carrier. "Property/casualty companies aren't typically used to those issues," he noted.

Another primary issue, according to Nichols, is to make sure the liability coverage will take guaranteed coverage related to an incident that occurs while the plan is in place but possibly filed after the policy has lapsed. "Make sure the coverage is written on an occurrence basis as opposed to claims made," he said.

HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH?

Unfortunately, there is no philosopher's stone in the alchemy of computing the levels of insurance coverage necessary for an entertainment venue such as an FEC. Haas & Wilkerson, for instance, suggests a minimum limit for both general liability and automobile liability of $1 million per occurrence. However, the company also notes that excess limits are sometimes needed.

Risky Business

While insurance may have taken its rightful place along with death and taxes as one of life's constants, lowering the potential for claims through the implementation of a risk management policy can go a long way toward reducing premiums. Here are just a few tips:

- ✔ Strictly adhere to the use of safety features
- ✔ Warn against injury with signage
- ✔ Defend against injury by maintaining proper records
- ✔ Develop a loss prevention organization
- ✔ Incorporate the safety program into company philosophy
- ✔ Educate employees about safety standards
- ✔ Establish first-aid facilities and medical programs
- ✔ Conduct regular inspections
- ✔ Investigate accidents

Tips courtesy of David Smith of Allied Specialty Insurance.

Veterans of the family entertainment industry have suggested at least $500,000 worth of liability insurance for every $100,000 invested, but insurance professionals such as Nichols say it is not that simple.

"A lot of FEC business is handled on a boiler plate basis and in that case it's not being tailored for the client," said Nichols, who suggested that any of a number of factors come into play for each individual location. Those factors include the size of the operation, the types of attractions (obviously a go-kart center needs more than a midway game operation), the number and age and experience level of the employees, and the revenue generated.

A location's past history of claims must also be taken into consideration, and the sad truth is that the number of incidents and claims is going to affect an operator's bottom line. "Under normal circumstances, a large claim won't cause an account to be canceled," said Allied's Smith. "However, if multiple large occurrences are reported or if there's a continued potential for large claims, the owner or manager will want to take necessary avenues in loss control and prevention to curtail the claims."

While the penalties for avoiding Smith's advice go unsaid, anyone who has a spotty driving record or knows someone who does can draw their own conclusion.

FEC operators seeking insurance must also remember that about half of the states now require liability insurance with limits ranging anywhere from $300,000 in the state of Pennsylvania to $1 million in Florida, New York, Texas, and other states, according to Beckman. In addition, most lending institutions require some form of coverage.

The silver lining behind all these gray skies filled with potential risks and imminent expenditures is that traditional insurance carriers are more aware of the family entertainment business as that industry grows.

"There's been a lot of capital coming into the industry because entertainment is such a high priority," Nichols observed. "I think people in the insurance industry are looking at it as a more lucrative opportunity. It's gaining in reputation as being more mainstream." ▲

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Annual Family Fun Edition

SEGA GameWorks STAKES ITS CLAIM TO NEW TERRITORY

Earlier this year the world's first Sega GameWorks arcade opened its doors and ushered in new hope for the arcade industry. At the star studded opening, viewers on MTV and the Internet got to witness the huge mega-arcade's first steps into the spotlight. Dreamworks SKG, Universal Studios, and Sega hope that those steps will be the first in a steady march toward prosperity and success.

The first GameWorks, spreading across 30,000 square feet, opened in Seattle with the next one following shortly in Las Vegas, this time being an even more massive 50,000 square feet. In July, the third will open in Ontario Canada, and by the year 2000, there are plans to have as many as 100 GameWorks opened up in several different countries. Steven Spielberg has been involved every step of the way, helping with both the arcade layout and design of actual games. His influence gives the space the feel of a lavish movie set, with industrial lighting and high-tech sound throughout. Here's a quick sketch of the premier facility in Seattle:

THE ARENA

This is the area with the big linked games like the eight-player *Indy 500* game, which goes for $4 a pop and draws long lines of players. A heckling announcer is on hand with running play-by-play commentary on race leaders and witty chiding for drivers struggling to keep up with the pack. The games here all have huge screens, and the theme park scale is enhanced with nightclub

SEGA SUPER GT

Indianapolis Arcade
A Deluxe averaged $138 per day over 16 days.

Midwest Game Room
2 Twins averaged $154 per day each in 10 days on test.

No. CA Arcade
A Deluxe Single Player earned $1,286 in 6½ days and ranked #1.

East Coast Arcade
1 Twin Earned $965 in a week and ranked #1.

No. CA Arcade/Mini-Golf
1 Twin earned $1,018 in a week and ranked #1.

No. CA Arcade
1 Twin earned $1,396 in a week and ranked #1.

Canadian Arcade
A Deluxe Single Player earned $1,921 in one week!

Atlanta Arcade
1 twin earned $806.25 in 5 days and ranked #1.

Canadian Arcade
2 Deluxe Single Players earned:

	Unit 1	Unit 2
Week #1	$1,297	$1,332
Week #2	$1,581	$1,675

Seattle Arcade
1 Deluxe Single Player earned:

Week 1	$ 874
Week 2	$1,002

Ranked #1 each week

So. Cal Arcade/Mini Golf
1 Deluxe Single Player earned:

Week #1	$1,896
Week #2	$1,030
Week #3	$1,086
Week #4	$1,042
2nd unit	$1,013
Week #5	$1,073
2nd unit	$1,071
Week #6	$1,122
2nd unit	$1,025

Western Arcade
Over 2½ days, 4 Twins earned:

Unit 1	$490
Unit 2	$472
Unit 3	$451
Unit 4	$452

EasT Coast Arcade
1 Deluxe Single Player earned:

Week #1	$1,084
Week #2	$1,484
Week #3	$1,035
Week #4	$1,064
Week #5	$1,143
Week #6	$1,071

Ranked #1 every week!

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lighting and pulsating alternative music. Video screens showing contestant's faces and rock videos abound. This is also where the huge Spielberg game installations, such as Game Arc and Vertical Reality, are located.

THE LOADING DOCK

Here is where the new games like *The House of The Dead* are dropped off and previewed before being moved to other parts of the arcade. The size of the games here are only slightly less impressive than the Arena area, and Sega's *The House of the Dead* shooting game is truly awesome when seen on a huge 50-inch screen. To give an idea of the size of the arcade, there is an actual 18-wheeler truck trailer used as part of the wall in this area.

THE LOFT

A more relaxing area which has a food court, a bar, a classic video games section (with *Galaxian* and even *Pong!*), and the Internet lounge. The Lounge has plants and a cocktail club atmosphere featuring red leather captain's chairs with laptops built into the armrests. Here, people can get away from the bustle of the rest of GameWorks and enjoy a beer, brewed locally, or a small gourmet pizza. They can also surf the Internet, at a per-minute cost, and send e-mail to other GameWorks patrons around the world. Exclusive online chat sessions allow gamers to exchange tips and secrets with other players 10,000 miles away or 10 feet away.

> ***"Steven Spielberg has been involved every step of the way, helping with both the arcade layout and design of actual games."***

SPIELBERG GAMES

While this isn't really an official area, it's worth giving these games their own special section because they are what truly make GameWorks more than just a large scale arcade. The first is, Game Arc, an eight-player game based on the popular PC game, Descent. (It literally uses a form of the same graphics and flight engine.) Each player gets a mini-IMAX screen and surround sound audio. Game Arcs will eventually be linked with other units in other cities, and video cameras will enable to players to actually see the faces of the characters they are shooting at.

The second installation is Vertical Reality, a 24-foot tall shooting game where contestant's chairs literally rise and fall along the structure of a huge video building as they advance. Rumor has it that if players get high enough and then die, they experience an actual "free fall" roller coaster-style drop back to the bottom. That's the appeal here, traditional arcade fun combined with amusement park spectacle.

THE VIBE

No one under 18 is allowed in after 8 p.m. The target audience is parents who used to love arcades when they were kids but found that the arcades didn't grow up with them. GameWorks wants the successful young adult crowd, and with so many computer and game literate people in Seattle (Microsoft is a huge employer), they've picked their first target market dead on. The facility has been packed almost every day since opening.

One of its most impressive innovations is the system of "smart cards" or little credit cards to pay for games. Just as traditional credit cards helped consumers spend more by distancing customers from tangible money being spent, so do the smart cards. In olden days, you could feel the roll of quarters slowly being liberated from your pockets. Now, you insert a card and simply press replay. ▲

This article was written by Brandon Milner, a game player and musician who lives in the Seattle area. Photos courtesy of Sega GameWorks.

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Speed Rumbler
RENEGADE

American Sammy's Rick Rochetti was with Taito when this photo was taken. I'm sorry to say I don't recall the name of the gentleman on the right.

Here's Mark Struhs of Dynamo in the early '80s, probably at an AMOA show. (Remember when that was about the only one to go to!) He's still with Dynamo and has made a positive impact on the coin-op industry.

You all know Michael and John McEwan and their famous *Boom Ball* and *Big Mouth* games, but only those in the business quite a few years would remember their dad, Mel. Mel had a company named Ramtek before he founded Meltec. Now you know where the Mel in Meltec came from.

SHERIFF
SHERIFF

Sega's Al Stone (r) and his partner Ron Judy were representing Nintendo through their company Far East Video when Nintendo first came to the United States. It was a long time before its home game dominance.

GUEST COMMENTARY

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Now with over 200 successful laser game sites across the globe, The Zone Empire, known in the United States as Ultrazone–The Ultimate Laser Adventure, is the worldís fastest growing network of laser game companies and has been the industry's international leader since 1989. Yet, in today's fast moving, high-tech world, 1989 sounds like a very long time ago and places The Zone Empire among the proverbial grandfathers of the industry.

In the last four years alone, Ultrazone has opened over 60 laser game arenas in the United States and already we find ourselves reminiscing and indulging in "I remember when". . . stories about the old-days back when only three or four laser game companies exhibited at the major amusement trade shows. Back then, the question wasn't "Which game is best?" but rather, "What the heck is a laser game, anyway?"

Since those early days we have learned a lot about marketing and operating successful laser games. Most of what we have learned was from experience–not from a book. After all, just a few years ago it was a brand new industry segment; there were no models or plans from which to draw. Experience was the only teacher and some of the best information we gathered came down to learning from our mistakes. Today, I consider those mistakes and the problems they caused little more than tuition–the price of a good education on how to locate, design, build, market, and operate a successful laser game.

The peril of overnight success

When it comes to laser games, a common misconception is they require little if any marketing. After all, in a lot of markets the new laser tag arena is a one-of-a-kind entertainment destination. It's a new format combining elements of video games with real people

> *"In this industry the way customers feel about your personnel and the treatment they receive is critical."*

and live action. The primary audience is a growing and comparatively prosperous demographic: adolescents and young adults. And, it's a game based on classic winners: hide and seek, cops and robbers, cowboys and Indians, and capture the flag. Whatever you call it, laser games are rooted in a form of entertainment that has held our interest since before recorded history.

Now, when you add in high-tech equipment, a great arena, flashing lights, vibrating vests, sound effects, and a little fantasy, how could it lose?

So it is true that laser games with enough power and flexibility to reach a broad market can operate at respectable levels without too much effort, at least for a while. Perhaps, then, the real question is not: "Do I have to market my laser game?" but rather, "Am I reaping all the potential benefits from my laser game arena?"

Avoiding the comfort trap

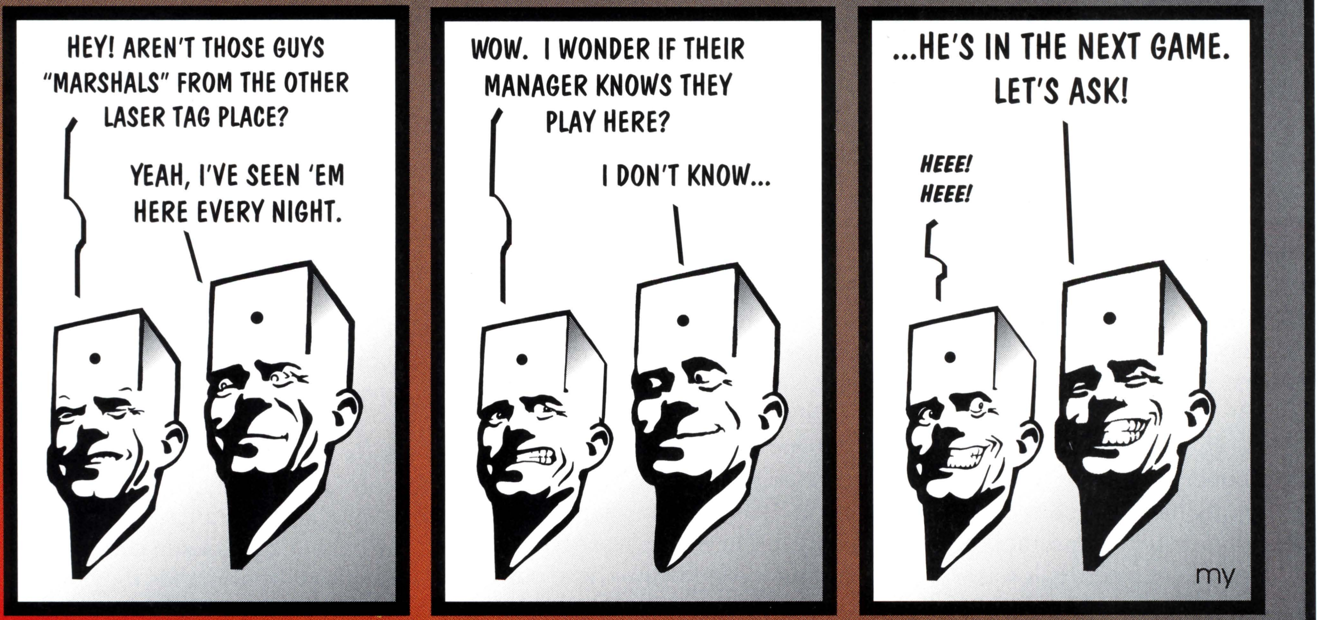
When we opened the first corporate Ultrazone site in Las Vegas, we had a written, comprehensive marketing plan. We hosted a private grand opening party complete with a DJ Laser Challenge radio remote broadcast, spotlights, and free games for guests. The press came to the media preview and Ultrazone was featured on the local TV networks and cable. In addition, we did several radio talk shows and the major papers ran feature stories with photos. We could not have asked for more.

The following evening, a Friday night, we held our public grand opening party. In addition to the free publicity from the night before, we had saturated our drawing area with flyers announcing the opening; participated in a few cross-promotions with neighboring businesses; and bought print, radio and television advertising. People lined up for blocks to get in to play that night and the site was jammed for months after that. It was fantastic. We had this great business right out of the gate. No waiting for the business to build. It was cash flow from day one.

What we didn't know cost us some early tuition. The fact is a well-located, well-designed, and well-publicized laser game will usually open to capacity crowds and sustain that momentum for quite a while. What we knew at some level but didn't pay adequate attention to was obvious—at some point the growth curve would begin to flatten.

We should have taken advantage of the early momentum and continued our marketing push throughout and after this peak period. Instead, we did what a lot of new laser game owners do. We got complacent on a number of fronts. The corporate side of Ultrazone turned its attention to installing our first franchises and left management of the site to our store managers and employees. We didn't attend to a number of marketing related issues that would help us maintain momentum.

For example, it was time to refresh


HEY! AREN'T THOSE GUYS "MARSHALS" FROM THE OTHER LASER TAG PLACE?
YEAH, I'VE SEEN 'EM HERE EVERY NIGHT.
WOW. I WONDER IF THEIR MANAGER KNOWS THEY PLAY HERE?
I DON'T KNOW...
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my

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If the game is fast and exciting, you can turn one birthday party into 10 or more bookings for the upcoming year.

Laser games have a special draw because they put human interaction back into high-tech entertainment.

the arena, change the layout, maybe add a couple of ramps, and reconfigure the interactive elements. We needed more seating for parents who brought their kids on Saturday and teens waiting for their games to be called on busy weekends. And, we had hundreds of regular players and role-playing members and it was time to show some appreciation for their loyalty. We should have planned a "members only" event, introduced some advanced role playing features, and scheduled special competitions to keep experienced players fired up about the game.

But, when the lines are extending out the door and the cash registers are ringing, its hard to see the need for spending money on promotions and advertising. The end result was we lost the momentum we had built in the first few months and business threatened to go flat. Once we saw what was happening we got things in gear. We reviewed our staffing structure; brought in some fresh, enthusiastic employees; upgraded our facilities; and resumed the implementation of our original marketing plan. Business started growing again and with the continuation of our marketing effort it is still going strong.

Reaping the full benefit

Unfortunately, too many laser games are unknowingly languishing in the aftermath of the post-opening leveling-off. This is particularly true of some arenas which are part of larger entertainment centers. They opened with gusto, and are currently operating at an adequate level but are not bringing in the kind of business we know is possible. For example, we have players around the globe who have purchased over 2,000 games. This July, 300 people from all over the States will fly to Las Vegas at their own expense to compete in a four-day national laser game tournament. And we have several franchises reporting record-breaking days, weeks, and months—two and three years after opening.

Blueprint for success: putting customers first

I used to think of customer service as an operations issue related in some ways but separate from our marketing efforts. However, in this industry the way customers feel about your personnel and the treatment they receive is critical. Customer service is your most important marketing tool.

A large portion of your audience is kids and adolescents. The kids themselves may or may not be particularly offended by youngish personnel who dismiss them or issue curt instructions similar to reprimands they may get at home. But you can be certain mom and dad are keeping an eye on things and will bristle at less than courteous service directed at their children.

Young staff members have to be trained to treat the kids, even though they may barely be tall enough to look over the counter, like the valued customers they are, and not their obnoxious little brothers or sisters.

Keep in mind there is no more sensitive group to serve than teens. For most high school kids, peers are a major influence. If a couple of teens have a great time in your arena, they will talk it up and the word will spread. If there is a problem, particularly an issue of fairness, it can have serious repercussions. The easiest way to turn off a group of kids is to have a game referee with an "attitude" unfairly penalize a player. The player will be turned off by the unfair treatment and get every one he knows talking about the problem too.

Respect and like your audience

A couple of years ago, I visited an Ultrazone arena and spent some informal time with the site manager who, it turned out, was to have a short tenure. I arrived before opening one morning while he getting ready for the day. He seemed a little irritated about something so I asked him, "What's up?"

"Ah!" he responded, "it's these kids! Look at the mess they leave. They don't care about anything but themselves. It's not the way I was when I was a kid. So I just don't put up with any lip from them."

Red flags went up for me immediately because I knew this manager wasn't relating to his audience and was probably not able to set the right tone for his employees. The truth is things have changed but the only way to build a business where young people are a big part of the customer base is to learn to treat them as customers. In order to do this, everyone at the site from staff to managers needs to appreciate the need for mutual respect between us and our customers—no matter what their age.

There are no silver bullets

Whom do you need to reach in order to maximize the potential of your laser game? As long as you have a game system that can give you flexibility, lots of game formats, and special player enhancements, you can go after any audience and beef up those skinny times in your operating schedule.

For example, do you have great weekend mornings and afternoons with parents and kids, but slower than optimal Wednesday and Thursday nights? Then use your laser game as a draw for older teens and young adults by creating an atmosphere of fun with inexpensive themes and prizes for the highest score, lowest score, and most unusual doubles team. Or encourage more serious players to stay around for late night competitions. And try discounts for high school athletic teams or unlimited games for a set price after midnight. At Ultrazones around the country we stretch our weekends into the wee hours of the morning by offering "All You Can Play" late nights and by hosting "fast action" eliminator tournaments and other skill enhancing challenges for experienced players.

Maybe your center has the opposite problem in terms of audience reach and utilizing less than peak hours. Your video games are buzzing and ringing with older teens, but your summer weekdays, after school hours, and weekend mornings are slow. Again, if you have a system with enough power and versatility, you can program games perfect for the youngest segment of your laser tag market. Kids love the fast action of laser tag for their birthday parties.

If you want to really maximize the benefit, every child at the party has to have a great experience. It's time to turn off all the elements of skill and strategy that made Friday night's after-midnight action so exciting and put together a special game just for kids. At our Las Vegas site, we set the laser fire fast so there is lots of action. Then we minimize the downtime, shut down most of the interactive elements to reduce unexpected fire, and let kids loose for some shoot 'em up fun. The scores are high and the game is exciting so we have a dozen kids going home to ask for their next birthday at Ultrazone.

A great arena plus flashing lights, vibrating vests, sound effects, and a little fantasy make for a can't miss attraction for all ages.

These are just a couple of examples of the audience drawing power of your laser game. If you have the right equipment, know your audience, and target your promotions to the specific segment you want to attract, you can broaden your audience reach and significantly improve your slow time numbers. This is something a laser game can do for you like almost no other new attraction.

There isn't one best approach for marketing every laser game. It takes consistent effort over time. But it won't happen by itself. To borrow a line from Nike, you have to "Just Do It."

Final word

In addition to a good attitude about your customers, all employees should have a sense of excitement about the game itself. The best managers and the best employees are people who know and love the game. ▲

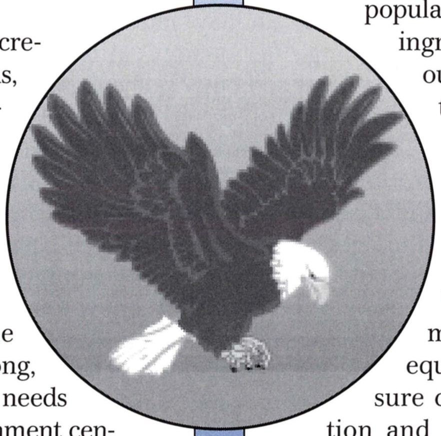
GREAT American Recreation HAS SET ITS GOALS HIGH

A cabinet and table game manufacturer gracing the cover of an issue devoted to family entertainment might seem a little strange. That is until you see that Great American Recreation has targeted FECs with the introduction of junior sized versions of its air hockey, pool table, and foosball games. Then it makes perfect sense.

Great American Recreation has seen older, seemingly well established companies merge or simply close their doors on the coin-op entertainment business. They saw it happen and realized that any company must be prepared to change direction should it become necessary, while still offering what the customer demands.

To do just that Great American Recreation has the vision to see new horizons, is dedicated to the growth of the industry, is able to influence change, has a maturity in the direction of competition, and takes pride in its dedication to persevering.

These self-proclaimed assets have allowed Great American to go far beyond being classified as a pool table manufacturer, to being deemed a strong, determined corporation addressing the needs of street operators and family entertainment centers alike.



THE EVOLUTION

The evolution of Great American Recreation began with a cabinet company named D&D Cabinets, which was founded in 1979 by David Celani. D&D built a reputation for quality cabinets with its contract work, which today is still a vital part of the company. Great American Billiards was formed in 1990 and both companies continue to flourish in a 65,000-square-foot corporate complex in Cranston, R.I. The company name, Great American Recreation, was adopted to reflect the expanding product line.

Since the company has its roots with cabinet design, Celani feels strongly about a cabinet's role in the quality of any game. He explained: "Our company has a solid foundation of quality cabinets and that has been a big advantage in introducing games that remain popular for many years. This most important ingredient is never overlooked in any of our products from the design concept to the final product introduction."

Great American's headquarters is filled with all divisions of manufacturing and sales, complemented by an ever-expanding R&D department, engineering, service and repairs, business offices, and state-of-the art manufacturing. You'll find fully-equipped computerized machinery to ensure consistency and accuracy in production and advanced laminating machinery to finish the product with any Formica or laminate commercially available.

"Of primary importance to Great American is the ability to control all phases of the manufacturing process," said Celani. "This allows us to work with our customers to customize and fill their orders to their specific design. If a family entertainment center has a company color scheme and they require a specific color conversion cabinet for a bank of video games, for example, we can produce these cabinets to their exact specifications."

One of Great American's strongest assets is the

The Great American **EAGLE** Pool Table

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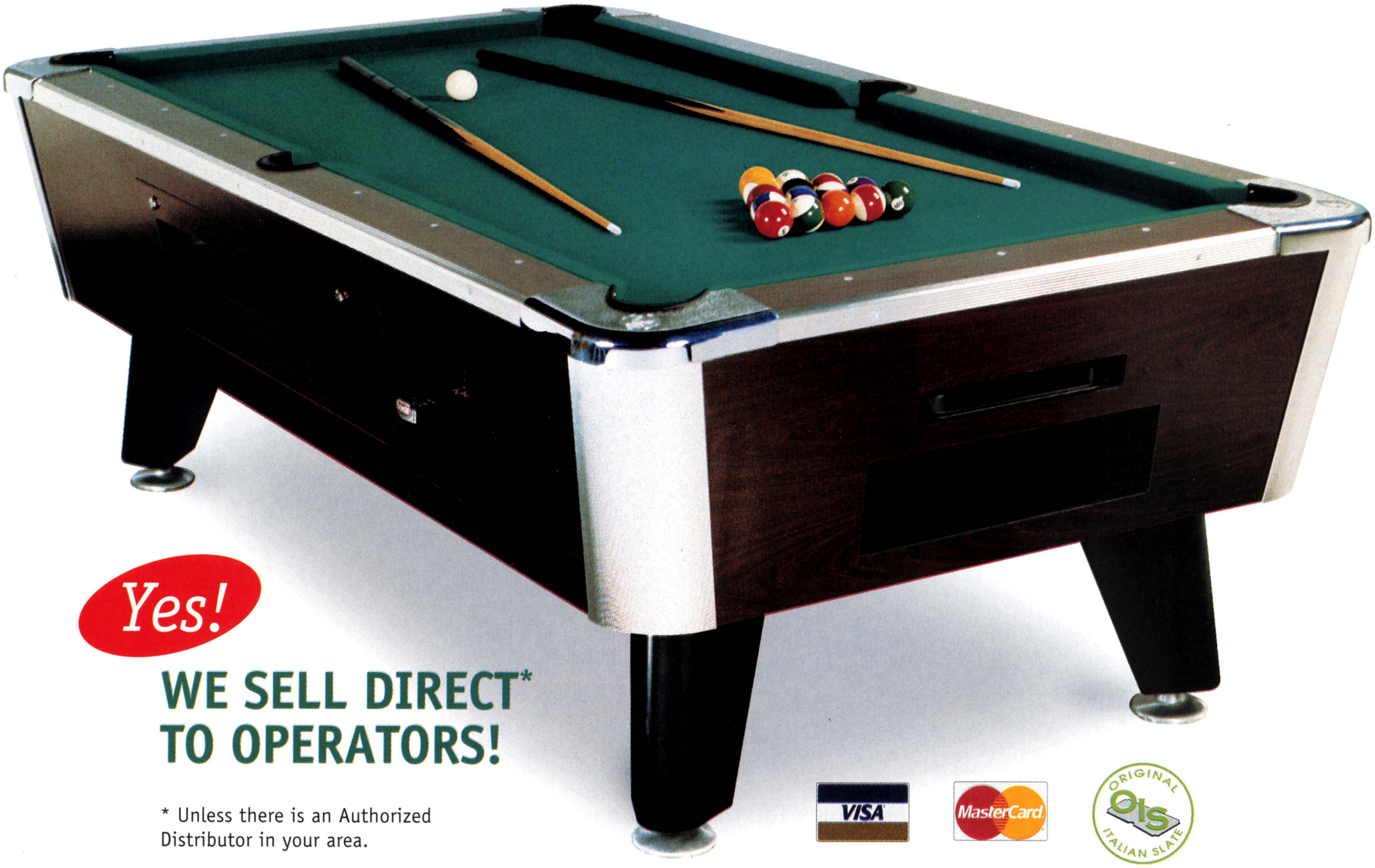

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competent, qualified staff dedicated to the growth of the company. Celani is the first to acknowledge that success is a team effort. Industry veteran Robert Keelyn, for instance, shapes the sales and marketing department for both domestic and international growth. Bob has many years of industry experience and is excited about the opportunities at Great American. "This company is going places with the caliber of products it's offering the industry. For those who do not want to settle for anything less than the best, we've got what they want," he exclaimed.

The team also includes Tina Ruggiero, office manager; Lisa Muccio, administrative assistant; Bob Palumbo, production manager; Jim Partington, production/assembly; and the newest addition to the team, William Wong, electronic engineering. "I am extremely proud of the staff," beamed Celani. "I feel confident that customer satisfaction is ensured in every division."

Keelyn added, "Our industry's market is changing virtually on a daily basis. As a company that produces games for the street operator, we are also keenly aware that our products also have tremendous entertainment value and profitability for family entertainment centers. We realize that the industry encompasses a very diverse market, and we must be diverse to cater to that market. We can't focus solely on one part of a much larger market."

President David Celani

Vice president of sales and marketing Bobby Keelyn

The office staff, (l-r): Bill Wong, Tina Ruggiero, Jim Partengton, Lisa Muccio, and Bob Palumbo.

The production staff in front of the company's headquarters.

THE PRODUCT

Players love to participate in interactive, action games. They simply can't achieve that degree of satisfaction on home games or Internet activities. The successful family entertainment center as well as the typical street location should not overlook the opportunity to offer their customers a friendly competitive game with action and high excitement.

Children can challenge other children to a game of foosball, air hockey, or pool. Or they can challenge their parents and enjoy that quality time spent together. The fun is endless with this type of equipment. Great American Recreation is poised to meet the market's demands.

The company's cornerstone product is its pool table, recently nominated in AMOA's best played pool table category. The line-up includes three models: the *Eagle*, the *Legacy*, and the *Monarch*. Already a winner in street locations, Great American has taken its pool table line a step further with the design and introduction of the *Kiddie Pool Table*, perfect for that interaction we spoke of between parents and kids in FECs.

Kiddie Pool, a fully coin-operated system with adjustable pricing, was designed specifically to be enjoyed by younger players. While they will love seeing their young customers having so much fun, operators will really be impressed with the 100 percent cabinet grade plywood construction, pearlized designer Formica, original Italian slate, electric blue felt, one-piece composite subway system for trouble free operation, dynamic primary colors of red and yellow balls to assist in teaching the game to youngsters, and child-size cue sticks just right for little hands.

Younger players can also enjoy another Great American favorite, *Junior Power Hockey*, a children's version of the adult favorite, *Power Hockey.* No more stools so youngsters can play the adult version! Now they have their own. *Junior Power Hockey* was specifically designed for children, but with the operator friendly features of the larger version. And don't forget that the quality is built right in just like other Great American products.

Features include an easy to clean Formica playfield with long term wearguard finish, overhead electronic scoring bridge with extra bright, extra large digital numbers; a playfield light; wide goals to promote super speed action; an all around custom, oversized Formica rail to prevent the puck from flying off; a hinged panel for easy service access at each cabinet end (no tools needed); ABS injected legs; bottom hinged door for storage and shipment; and an industrial rated blower for superior speed and performance.

A reliable, five-coin vertical coin system; centerline goalie box; and dramatic graphics enhance a pearlized Formica finish.

"The beauty of these tables, " notes Keelyn, "is not only that they weren't manufactured simply as smaller versions of the larger products, but that they were specifically designed around the height and reach of the children who will be playing the game. Of course, safety was a priority. Adults can still join in the game play with their little ones."

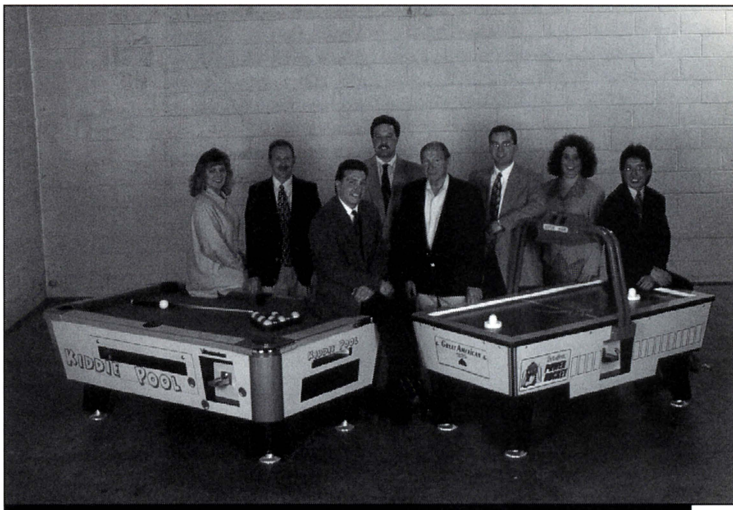
A previously overlooked game that is making a comeback in street locations as well as in FECs is *Action Soccer* (foosball). *Action Soccer* is available in an adult version and one for younger players. The game was designed with an angled corner top for a single goalie or a flat corner top for three-goalie operation. Formica on one-inch MDF core is available in custom cabinet colors, high performance polypropylene figures are break resistant, and medium sized handle grips complement solid chrome steel rods.

Action Soccer also has an anti-cheat jam proof ball return assembly, removable drawer system for easy access, a reliable five-coin vertical removable coin assembly that is easy to adjust on location and can be converted to most foreign currencies, ABS injected legs with individual leg levelers, and bold contemporary graphics with designer Formica for maximum player appeal.

With the increase in popular video game kits and software, Great American offers complete, factory ready conversion cabinets in several models: 34-inch pedestal showcase; 27-inch upright in two- or four-player versions; a 19-inch upright; cocktail; countertop; and woodgrain.

What does the future hold for this dynamic young company? "After reflecting on the previous year, which saw the growth of four distinctive pool table models added to the product line, and with the new contemporary look in graphics and visual appeal of all the products, a separation of coin-operated and home sales divisions, and the bold new marketing of our company's literature, we intend to follow this path with the release of several new products that are now on the drawing board," offered Keelyn.

He added, "We have an eye toward expansion domestically and internationally. We will not rest on our past success but strive to have an even better year and an even more successful future. We are ready to accept the challenges that the market offers. ▲



The staff is excited about the small versions of pool and air hockey.

Quality cabinets are still a staple.

A look at pool table production

School's OUT Work's IN

About this time of year hundreds of bright-eyed teenagers are descending on you looking for work. Chances are you'll hire a few. How do you choose the right ones, and what do you do with them once they're on the job? In other words, how do you select and manage young summer workers?

Start by understanding that teenagers are different from the rest of the world—as if you didn't know that already. Not only in the way they dress and what they consider "way cool," but also in why they work and what they expect from a job.

True, some are only working to buy tickets to the latest "killer" rock group's concert. Others may be testing the waters of a particular trade or profession to see if it fits them. Some may be thinking about starting their own business, just like you did.

Those planning to attend college may be developing a resume. Admission to better universities is very competitive. Colleges now look for well-rounded applicants rather than simply bright students.

In addition, work is an important part of a young person's education. Even if teenagers don't see work as part of school, we adults do. In a 1995 survey commissioned by the National Youth Employment Coalition, over 82 percent of those responding said preparing young people to enter the workforce was more important than reducing taxes!

The poll, conducted by Market Facts Inc., also found:

◆ 83 percent of Americans think that it is critical or very important for young people to gain paid work experience.

◆ 80 percent believe tax incentives should be offered to encourage employers to hire and train youth who might otherwise have trouble getting a job.

◆ Two-thirds see a connection between unemployment, crime, and drug use.

◆ 60 percent favor requiring work experience outside of school as part of the high school curriculum.

What do teenagers gain from a job? A sense of self-worth, but only if you take the time to explain how their job fits into the grand scheme of a productive enterprise. They also learn that most problems in the real world are like the math word problems they hate so much, and begin building their problem-solving abilities. They develop decision-making skills, and cultivate a sense of responsibility.

Do you need a college degree in secondary education to employ teenagers? Of course not. Bare in mind, though, their job (especially the first one) is an educational experience. Assume the role of teacher as well as employer and you become part of the solution to the country's educational problems.

THEY'RE EVERYWHERE

With so many kids looking for work, how do you choose the right ones for your family amusement center or arcade? How do you supervise them once they're on the job? Like everything else in management, there's a process.

Start with an understanding of the child labor laws, both federal and state. Under federal law, 16- and 17-year-olds can work an unlimited amount of hours in any job the Department of Labor (DOL) has not defined as hazardous. The only DOL hazardous job that may be common to some Play Meter readers is driver of a motor vehicle or outside helper on a motor vehicle.

Minors under 18 can't be employed in either capacity. Like chicken soup, it couldn't hurt for you to check out DOL's other hazardous jobs. A the same time, research any state limitations on employing youngsters under 18—county and local regulations, too.

Federal law restricts the jobs 14- and 15-year-olds can perform, how

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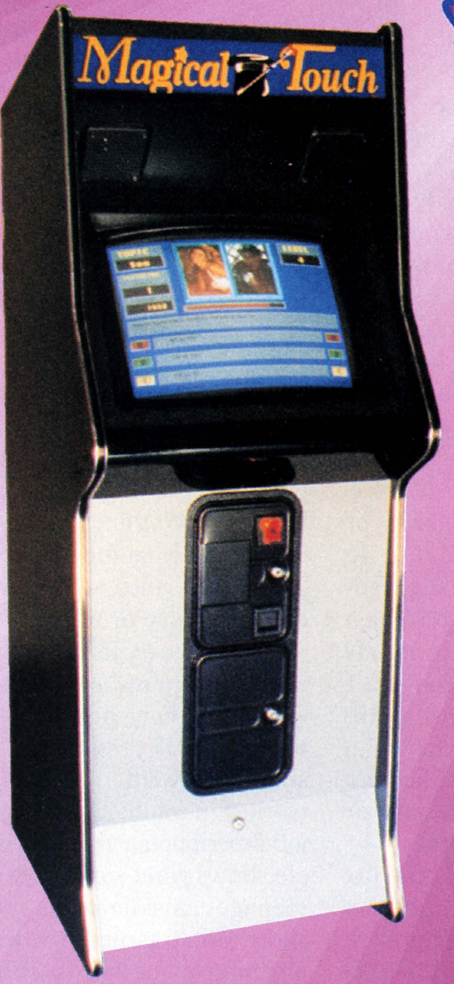

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long they can work, and when they can work. They can't climb ladders or work on scaffolding, and are limited to working outside of school hours in non-manufacturing, non-mining, non-hazardous jobs up to three hours on a school day, 18 hours in a school week, eight hours on a non-school day, and 40 hours in a non-school week.

They must work between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m., except from June 1 through Labor Day, when evening hours are extended to 9 p.m. Here again, check with your state department of labor to determine if state law further limits the work of 14- and 15-year-olds. It wouldn't hurt to see if there are any county or local ordinances on the subject.

There are two federal programs that may work to your advantage when employing younger workers. The first is the new Opportunity Wage provisions of the recent Minimum Wage Law.

The federal minimum wage increased to $4.75 per hour on Oct. 1, 1996 and will become $5.15 per hour on Sept. 1, 1997. Despite those changes, employees under 20 years of age can be paid an Opportunity Wage of $4.25 per hour during their first 90 consecutive calendar days of employment with an employer. Check with your accountant or lawyer.

The other program that may help you is the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC). This program provides federal tax credits for hiring youths residing in Empowerment Zones (EZ) and Enterprise Communities (EC), areas earmarked by the government for special economic development. (Remember, a tax credit is better than a deduction. Credits reduce your tax liability dollar for dollar; deductions don't. A $100 credit saves $100 in taxes; a $100 deduction saves $100 multiplied by your tax rate. For example, if you're in the 35 percent tax bracket, a $100 deduction reduces your taxes by only $35.)

The credit applies whether the EZ/EC youth works inside or outside the EZ/EC. To qualify for the tax credit, the employer must hire EZ/EC residents who are 18 through 24 (high-risk youths), or 16- and 17-year-olds who work between May and September (summer youth employees).

The maximum tax credit for high-risk youths who begin work between Oct. 1, 1996 and Sept. 30, 1997 is $2,100, or 35 percent of their first year's wages up to $6,000. The maximum credit for a summer youth employee is $1,050, or 35 percent of the first $3,000 in wages paid for any 90-day period between May 1 and Sept. 15, 1997.

As with any government program, there are hoops to jump through (i.e., a certificate that an employee is a member of a qualified group from the state employment security agency, etc.). If you're interested in the WOTC program, check with your accountant or friendly, local, neighborhood IRS agent for more information.

Smiling teens in logo shirts and hats welcome visitors to Celebration Station in Metairie, La.

HIRING RIGHT

According to Peter Drucker, the management guru's management guru, all staffing decisions require knowing two things: what the job requires and what the employee can do. Those two rules are the same if the employee is 16 or 60.

The best way for you to know what any job requires is to write a job description. For positions filled by teenage employees, the job description should be written with the younger worker in mind. The sample teenage job description accompanying this article shows what some of those special teenage considerations might be. In short, don't assume teenagers know anything about the job. When dealing with younger employees, the best approach is to belabor the obvious, then belabor it some more.

With a job description in hand, how do you match an applicant's strengths to the job's requirements, especially when the applicant has never worked before? The answer is to use the first

Really Fun
Family Amusement Center

SAMPLE YOUTH JOB QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Why do you want this job?
2. What makes you think you're right for this job?
3. What do you find hardest about working?
4. What do you find easiest about working?
5. Why did you leave your last job (if applicable)?
6. How long do you plan to work here?
7. What are your favorite subjects in school?
8. What are your least favorite subjects in school?
9. What extra curricular activities are you involved in?
10. What are your hobbies?
11. What awards have you won?
12. Do you plan to go to college?
13. Give me two references from your past jobs (if applicable).
14. Give me two references from school.
15. Give me two references (not family) who know you.

two questions in Drucker's employee evaluation approach: 1) what has he done well, and 2) what is he likely to do well?

When the applicant has little or no work experience, you'll have to fall back on what they have done in school and during their leisure time to determine their strengths. What are their best subjects academically? In what extracurricular activities do they participate? What are their hobbies?

What do these areas tell you about the jobs in which they're likely to do well? The girl voted most popular on the swim team probably has the personality to work in customer contact areas. A member of the computer club might not have the people skills of Ms. Popularity but could be a whiz working on arcade games.

If the applicant had the presence of mind to write a resume, look there for the answers to these questions. If not, find out during the job interview. Try using the accompanying Youth Pre-Employment Questionnaire as a guide. In case your employment application form doesn't ask for references, the last item on the Questionnaire does. However you obtain references is fine as long as you do two things: get them and check them.

Once you've discovered a young applicants' strengths, match those abilities to the job requirements identified by your job descriptions. This process should result in placing younger workers in jobs where their talents can help you the most.

Really Fun
Family Amusement Center

SAMPLE YOUTH JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Food Counter Attendant

Usual Minimum Age Required: 14 (check federal, state, and local child labor laws)

Job Duration: ____ Full Time ____ Part Time (after school, etc.)
____ Summer

Education/Training: ____ High School Diploma Required
____ High School Diploma Not Required ____ Some On-the-Job Training

Description of Duties: ____________________
____

(Describe what the employee does. You're dealing with teenagers so don't assume they know much. In this position they'll come in contact with customers and need to make a good impression. Their appearance will count; tell them what you expect. The same is true of all the small details about the job that you take for granted. Think through what you expect and include it here.)

Safety Factors: ____________________
____

(If there are any special safety considerations, include them here. For example, employees should be careful when dealing with broken china and glassware and around hot grease. You're dealing with teenagers; belabor the obvious.)

Special Restrictions: ____________________
____

(If there are any special restrictions on employees doing certain kinds of work, include them here. For example, federal law prohibits employees under the age of 18 from using a meat slicer.)

SAFETY

According to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), over three million employees under the age of 18 will work at summer jobs this year. Some 200,000 of them will be injured at work, 64,000 at least seriously enough to require hospital room emergency treatment.

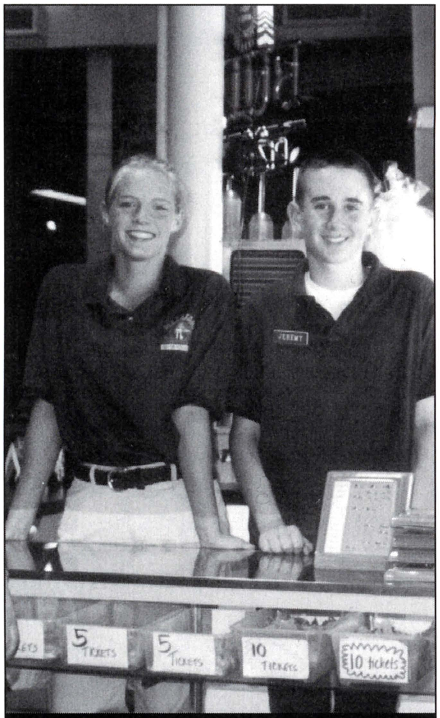
If these statistics aren't warning enough, between Oct. 1, 1994 and Sept. 30, 1995 (the latest data available), DOL investigators found over 6,000 teens working in violation of child labor laws and regulations, and assessed 1,242 companies $11.8 million in penalties for those violations. To avoid being included in these statistics, here are a few simple procedures to follow.

Remember that younger workers' inexperience counts against them. Workers with less than one year on the job account for almost one-third of all occupational injuries each year. To offset their lack of experience, teen workers need an extra measure of help.

Supervisors and co-workers can compensate for inexperience by showing teen workers how to do a job correctly and safely. What may be obvious to an adult, or simple common sense (a commodity rare among teenagers), may not be clear to a younger worker tackling a job for the first time. Use these steps in showing an inexperienced worker how to do a job:

1. **Give clear instructions and explain all safety precautions.**
2. **Ask trainees to repeat instructions and give them an opportunity to ask questions.**
3. **Show trainees how to perform the job.**
4. **Watch trainees while they do the job, correcting their mistakes.**
5. **After trainees have done the entire job, ask if they have any more questions.**

Once younger workers know what to do and have shown they can do the



Teen employees staff the redemption counter at Pizzafari in Covington, La.

job, check on them periodically. Make sure they continue to do the job correctly and safely. Don't let them take shortcuts with safety. Insure that supervisors and co-workers set a good example. Everyone must be safety-conscious.

As part of their training, spend extra time showing teenagers how to use any safety equipment needed for their job. If you're employing younger workers, you should already know what they can and cannot do under the child labor laws. They can't operate heavy equipment, use meat slicers, work late at night, use certain power tools, and the like.

Still, not all hazards are eliminated by these rules. In some cases, teen workers should wear protective equipment like safety shoes, hard hats, and gloves. If so, be sure they know what gear they need, where to find it, how to use it, and how to take care of it.

In other cases, teens simply need to know about the safety features of the equipment they're using or how to maintain a safe working environment. For example, they should know that the exit door must be kept free from clutter, that safety guards stay on machinery, or that equipment is turned off at the end of their shift. Remember, younger workers will require more supervision than your experienced crew.

Finally, every worker needs training in how to handle the emergencies that arise in your operation. That goes double for younger employees. What do they do in case of fire? How do they handle a disgruntled or potentially violent customer? What happens in the case of a power outage? Where do they go if they injure themselves or a customer is injured?

Well thought out emergency procedures are needed whether or not you employ teenagers. Such procedures can help reduce your liability in case of a lawsuit. Your liability insurance carrier may be able to help as well as the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

You're saying, "OSHA! This guy must be crazy. Me, call them?" No kidding. OSHA has a voluntary program

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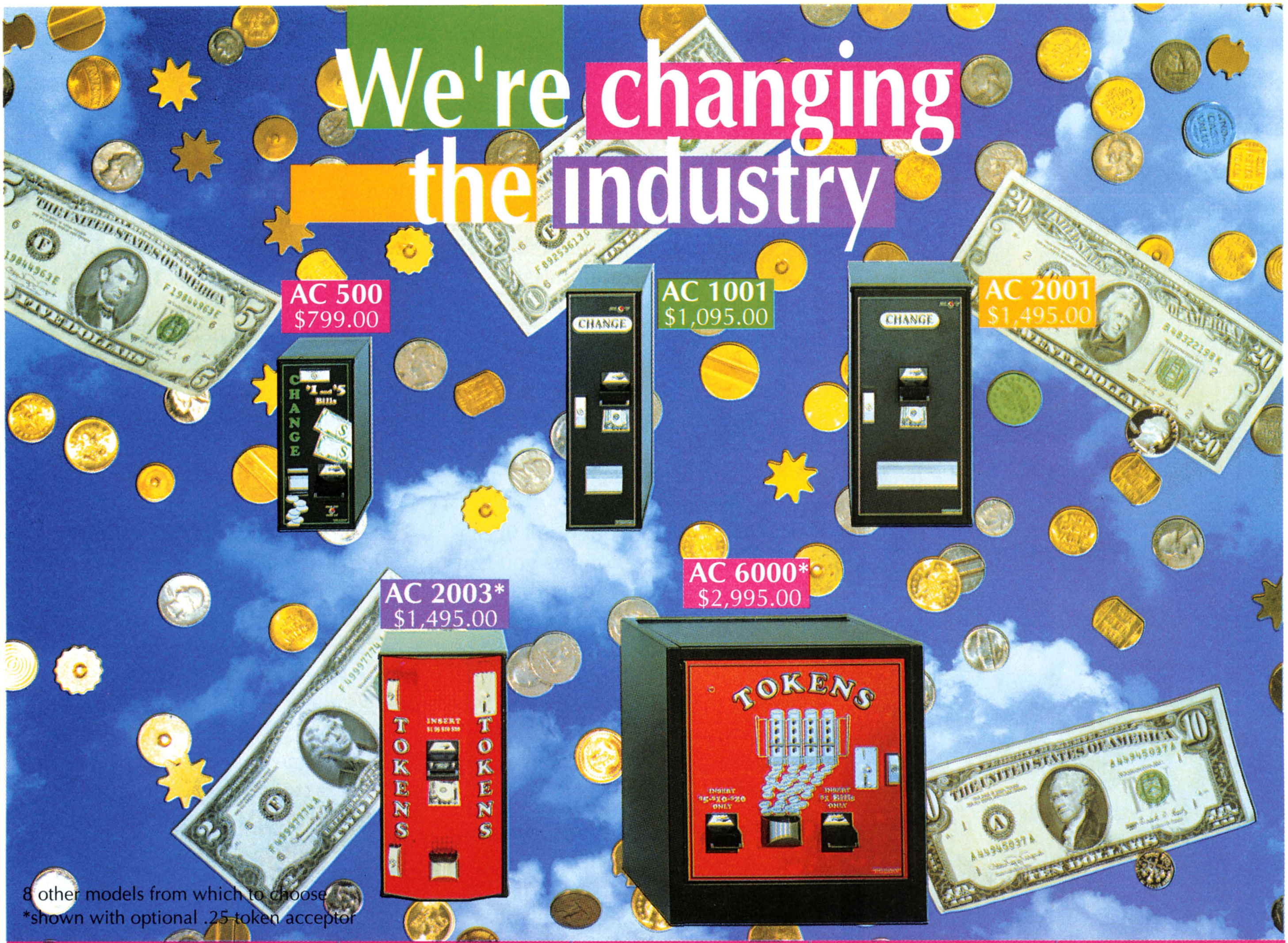
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Optional Capacity	1,000 quarters / tokens	2,800 quarters / tokens	5,6000 quarters / tokens	-
Payouts	hopper loaded quarter or token	hopper loaded, quarter nickel, dime or token	dual hopper optional .25 token acceptor	dual hopper optional .25 token acceptor
$1 Coin Payout	yes with a kit	yes	yes	yes
Validator Acceptance	$1,$2,$5, $10	$1, $2,$5,$10,$20	$1, $2, $5, $10, $20	$1, $2, $5, $10, $20
Validator Interchangeability	no	yes	yes	no
Token Bonus Payout	no	yes	128 options	128 options
Base and Header Kits	yes	yes	yes	base only
*Rear Loaders	no	yes	yes	no
Options Fronts	no	change or tokens	change or tokens	change or tokens
Optional Alarm System	yes	yes	yes	yes

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for small businesses to help companies like yours recognize and eliminate safety hazards. Funded by the feds and staffed by the states, the program provides 1) an appraisal of all mechanical and environmental hazards and physical work practices, 2) appraisal of the present job safety and health program or help establishing one, 3) a conference with management on the agency's findings, 4) a written report of recommendations and your agreement for correcting deficiencies, and 5) training and assistance with implementing recommendations.

The program does not result in citations or penalties as long as you correct any problems within the time agreed upon with the inspector.

What kinds of safety problems might such a consultation uncover? According to OSHA statistics for October 1995 through September 1996, the most frequent citations were issued to amusement parks for:

1. **Electrical wiring methods, components, and equipment**
2. **Stairs**
3. **Personal protective equipment**
4. **Employee emergency plans and fire prevention plans**
5. **Walking/working surfaces, general requirements**
6. **Guarding floor and wall openings and holes**
7. **Electrical, wiring design and protection**
8. **Machines, general requirements**

Arcades aren't immune from safety problems either. OSHA statistics for the same period show arcade violations as:

1. **Control of hazardous energy**
2. **Means of egress, general requirements**
3. **Woodworking machinery requirements**
4. **Walking/working surfaces, general requirements**

Whether your insurance carrier helps solve your safety problems or OSHA does, these problems need to be tackled. If you decide to do it yourself, look at your operation from the customer's point of view. What should the customer reasonably expect of your employees in an emergency? What would you expect if your child was in a bumper boat that started to sink or the engine caught on fire? What would you expect if your child was in an arcade and the shopping mall's fire alarm sounded?

What kind of work environment do you expect for your teenager? Do you provide that kind of environment for your teenage employees?

TEEN EMPLOYEE TIPS

Here are some ideas from other employers on how to address the challenges of teenage employees:

◆ A chain of conveyance stores in Pennsylvania issued different colored smocks to employees under 18. Supervisors know who can and can't operate the electric meat slicer.

◆ A fast food company with 8,000 young workers in five states developed a computerized tracking system to ensure that employees under 16 didn't work too many hours during school.

◆ The owner of 31 pizza restaurants in Virginia posted a $100 reward for any worker under 18 who reported they had been asked to perform a hazardous job.

Many employers have taken the simple, but critical, step of training their supervisors in the requirement of federal and state child labor laws.

As an employer of teenagers, you take on many different roles: boss, teacher, and guardian angel (to name a few), with none more important than the others. You also have a great opportunity to influence those who will lead the world into the future. Use it wisely. ▲

Channing Hayden is a New Orleans business executive, management instructor at Tulane University, and freelance writer.

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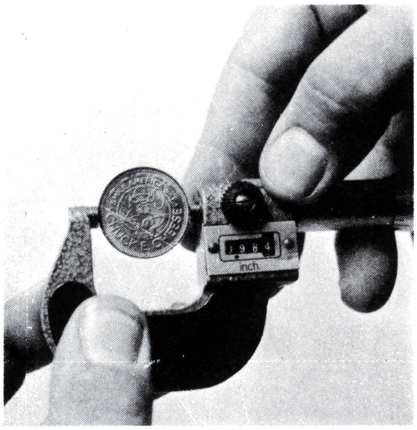

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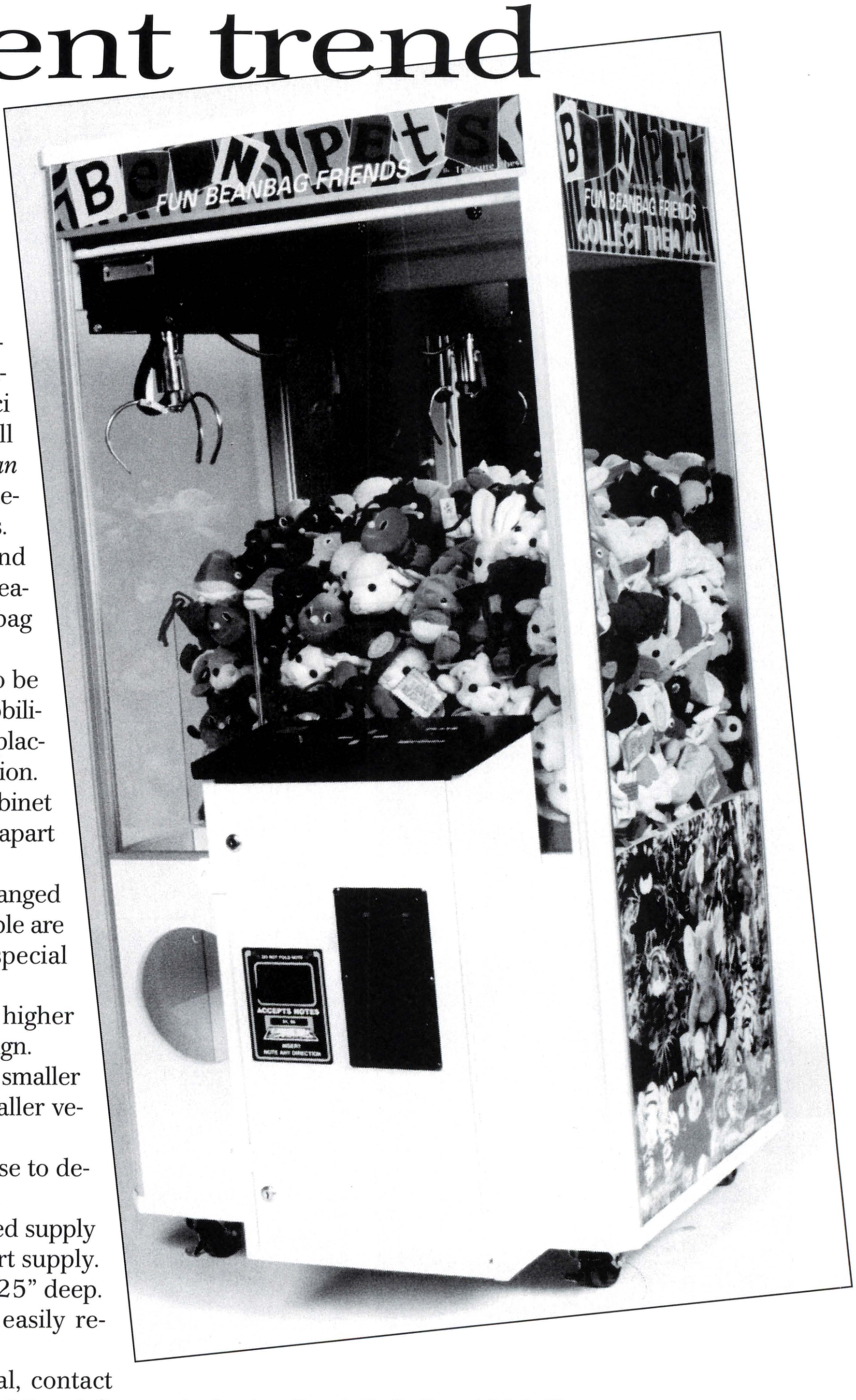
New bean bag crane TO CASH IN ON current trend



Beanie Babies are the current rage. Retailers can't keep them in stock, and the world's most famous fast food chain, McDonald's, drew crowds in search of more than 100 million teenie versions of the little fuzzy creatures, far outstripping demand for previous promotional items.

In a move that will allow coin machine operators to capitalize on this current phase, United Machine Corp. and industry veteran Carmen Ricci have joined forces to manufacture a new skill crane, with a lithographed cabinet, called *The Bean Pet.* Under its current configuration, the crane is designed to use bean bag items exclusively as prizes.

In promoting this new skill crane, United and Ricci have put forward a number of convincing reasons for jumping on the Beanie Baby and bean bag toy bandwagon with this new product:

Compact size—This will allow the machine to be placed in a wide range of locations. The unit's mobility will also provide operators with the option of placing the crane both inside and outside of any location.

Superior look—The modern lithographed cabinet will draw attention to itself and set the machine apart from other units.

Flexibility—*The Bean Pet's* graphics can be changed after a short time for as little as $100. Also available are custom colors, wood grains, corporate logos, special graphics designs, and specialized fad items.

Trade-in value—Used cranes will command higher prices because of their flexibility and graphic design.

Transportation—One person can handle this smaller sized unit which can also be transported in a smaller vehicle providing savings across the board.

New trends—T*he Bean Pet's* producers promise to design updated graphics for the newest in fad items.

United and Ricci will also provide a guaranteed supply of bean bag toy prizes, which have been in short supply. Unit dimensions are 64" high x 31-1/4" wide x 25" deep. The front console extends 8" out and can be easily removed.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact United Machine Corp. and Carmen Ricci, Route 37 and Germania Station Road, P. O. Box 4988, Toms River, NJ 08754; (908)286-1120; fax (908)341-3361. ▲

BETSON

Philadelphia Distributing

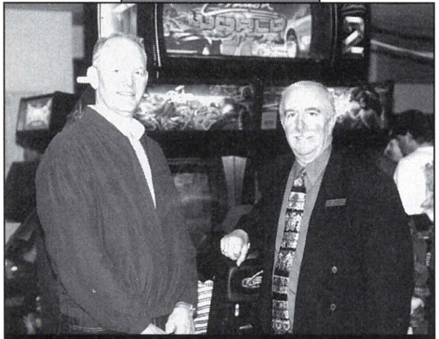
General manager Irv Spinak referred to this spring event as "the largest show we have ever had." He added, "We are fortunate to have good product for the smallest operator to the largest game room owner. It was a fun-filled day with good food, some terrific door prizes, and lots of good product. There was a festive and confident mood in the air."

LaserStar StarLight

From left: Irv Spinak of Betson Philadelphia, Mike Barshad of Penn Vending, Bob Geschine of Betson Enterprises, and Bob Dipipi of Betson Philadelphia by the new Rowe *StarLight* jukebox.

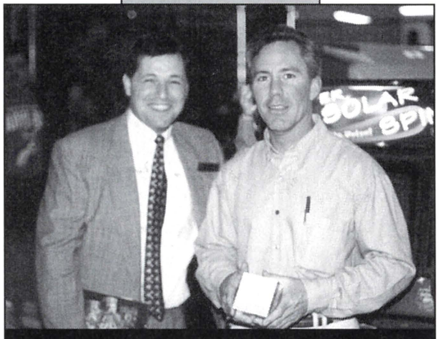
SEGA
DRM
1
SEGA SUPER GT

By Sega videos, (l-r): Bill Shay of Shay's Vending, Tony Maniscalco of Sega, and Joe Moffett of Betson Philadelphia.



Irv Spinak (r) of Betson Philadelphia with Alan Newell of Tricorp Amusements by Midway's *Cruis'n World*.

BETSON ENTERPRISES (N.J.): An overflow crowd of inquisitive operators came to the Betson Enterprises mid-week open house. Said Betson's Chris Cirillo, "What the manufacturers brought to the table didn't disappoint. The upcoming spring season should be a very profitable one for our customers. A great time was had by all. We send special thanks to our customers for attending." ▲



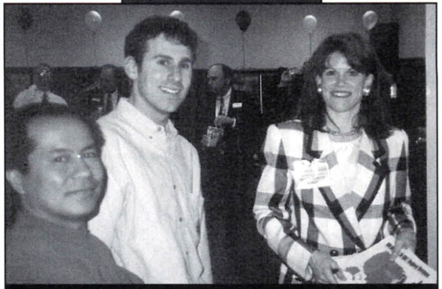
Bob Dipipi (l) of Betson Philadelphia greets Bob Scola of Bill's Vending by Lazer-Tron's *Super Solar Spin*.

Bob Geschine (r) of Betson Enterprises welcomes Chuck Pietz of Tricorp Amusements to Betson headquarters.

ATLAS DISTRIBUTING

(Chicago)

The Atlas Distributing post-ACME open house at the Chicago main office drew a good turnout of operators anxious to see the latest videos, countertops, sports games, pinballs, jukeboxes, and redemption games that have hit the market.



From left: Fredo Degoma and Charlie Shulman of Bell Vending with Marguerite Kirby by Incredible Technologies' *Peter Jacobsen's Golden Tee 3D Golf* and *World Class Bowling*.

Operator Boris Gipsa gets off track while playing P & P's *Police Trainer*, which is being marketed by ICE.

The simulators have it! Visitors settle in for some serious race car driving.

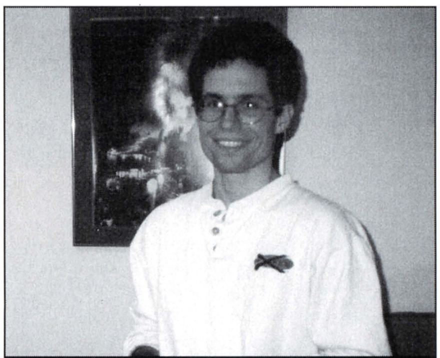
Jerry Marcus of Atlas (l) with Chuck Hescher of Star Amusement by P & P's *Police Trainer* and Capcom's *Three*.

Deep in conversation, (l-r): Mark Fellman of Mission Crane and Larry Berke of Design Plus.

Kwou Wong watches as Chuck Morton of ICE sets up *Home Run Derby*.

Operator Freddie Miles, formerly an Atlas employee, with Betty Jones of the Atlas accounting department.

Steve Stresnoski samples Micro Mfg.'s *Magical Touch* countertop.

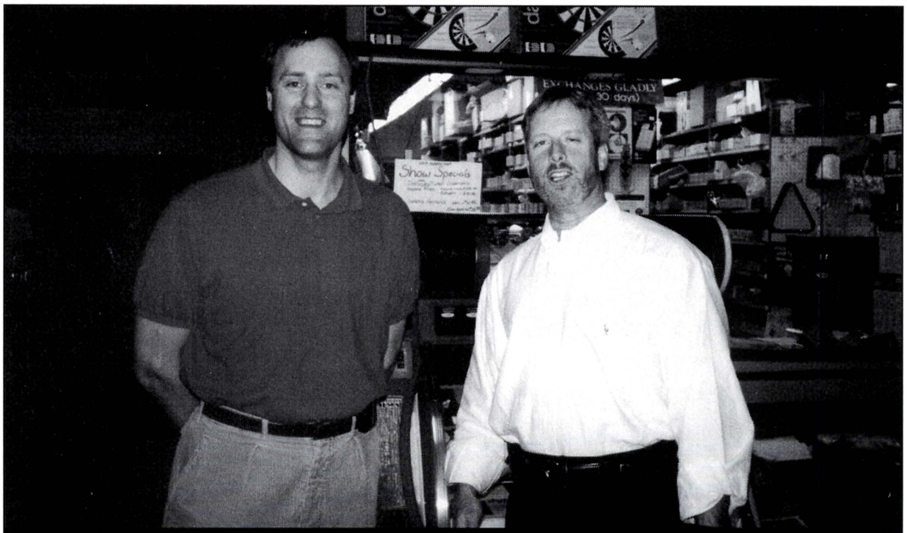


One of the key people behind P & P's *Police Trainer*, designer Fred Heyman.

MUSIC-VEND
DISTRIBUTING
(Seattle)

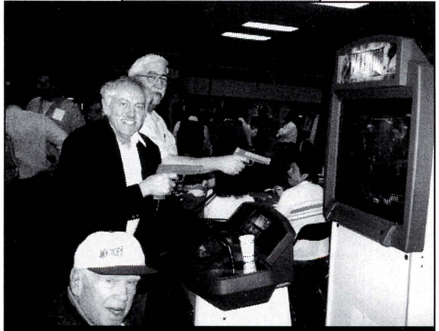
Music-Vend hosted its spring post-ASI show in late March to highlight the latest industry games. In addition to Music-Vend staff, factory representatives were on hand to explain game features. Door prizes were awarded to a number of lucky operators.

Jeff Timm of Timm Enterprises and Elaine Shirley of Atari compete on *San Francisco Rush*.



Jim Hart (l) of Hart Novelty and Mark Giovannetti of MTX by the service center.

Yvonne Carver of B & R Amusements with Lamar Forgue of Sega next to the *Sega Super GT*.



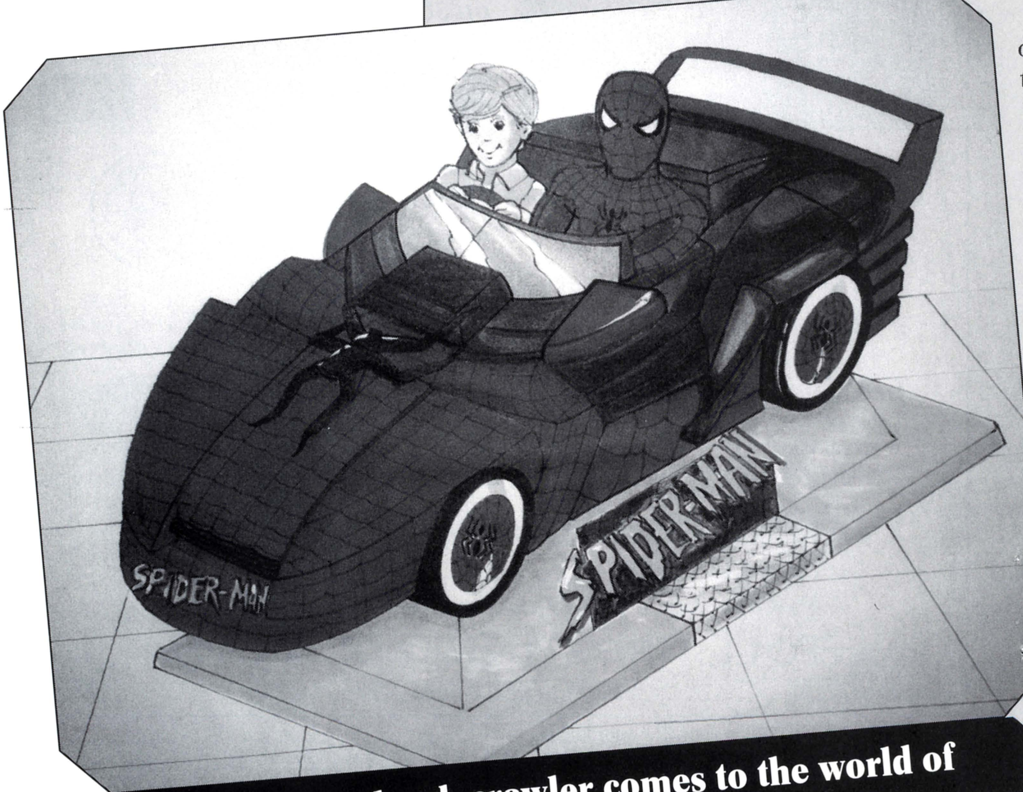
In mid-game play on Atari's *Maximum Force*: Mike Timmons (l) and Byron Hyde of Book Carnival.

Steve Ward (l) of Fabtek talks with Steven Levy of Music-Vend in front of the service center.

SPIDER-MAN spins new web with KIDDIE'S MFG.

Amazing Spider-Man, the Marvel Entertainment Group cartoon hero who burst on the scene in 1962, has earned a faithful following over 35 years of battles against the forces of evil. Spidey has appeared in comic books, comic strips, and TV series that have spanned several generations.

Our hero's real identity is that of Peter Parker, a young man who developed unique web-slinging powers after being bitten by a radioactive spider. Now the agile do-gooder is available in another incarnation: the new Spider-Man *Spiderider* kiddie ride from Kiddie's Mfg. in Puerto Rico.



The original web crawler comes to the world of kiddie rides in a flashy vehicle where young riders can drive shoulder to shoulder with the comic strip hero.

Spiderider joins Kiddie's Mfg.'s line of quality kiddie rides that includes the *Wal-Mart Truck*, *Toys R Us Truck*, *Toys R Us Wave Runner*, *Toys R Us Carousel*, *The Flintstones*, *The Jetsons*, *Tom & Jerry*, the *Batmobile*, and other licensed and traditional rides.

Features of the new *Spiderider* include solid-state music and timers, multiple coin selections, gel-coated base and components, double coin insert mechanism, special interactive lighting effect, one-year limited warranty, and an optional Spider interactive video display. *Spiderider* is U.L. and C.U.L. listed.

According to Eric Torres, president and CEO of Kiddie's Mfg., "We have been pioneers in creativity, design, and volume manufacturing. We have taken over the responsibility of marketing and selling our products via industry channels. Already we have strengthened our position, improved our management, addressed quality issues, and initiated a major restructuring.

"We have continued to obtain new licenses such as the *Spiderider*, which began distribution May 1. To follow are the *Incredible Hulk* and the *X-Men*. Both rides will be available for distribution by the third quarter of 1997."

Torres says that distributors and customers can rest assured that the company will continue to introduce more exciting and innovative products than ever before. For more information, call (787)897-3180/3605; fax (787)897-3377. ▲

Users' Reports

"We really liked our first Token Tech, which is why we ordered our second. I'm calling now to order our third."

"The Token Tech eliminates the need to spend hours making up rolls of 20 and 40 Tokens. We are saving enough labor cost to more than pay for it in less than two months."

"The best investment since we bought our fax machine. I can't ever imagine doing business without either one."

"We have good employees . . . The Token Tech removes the temptation for them to become "silent partners" by skimming the till."

"It's great! You should have come out with it 10 years ago."

"After using our Token Tech for Quarters, we are switching over to Tokens. Thanks to the dispenser, we got acquainted with your Token Systems."

"The Token Tech eliminates long lines at our cashier's cage. Our customers like it, too!"

"Our Batting Cage Tokens are valued at $1 each. Anyone with a high-value Token should be using a Token Tech."

"We use a larger size Token for our Carwash. All Tokens are sold through the Token Tech. It's accurate, and much faster, and it keeps our people honest."

"The first two Token Techs are excellent. We are sending our purchase order for six additional units."

"It's working just perfect. We love it!"

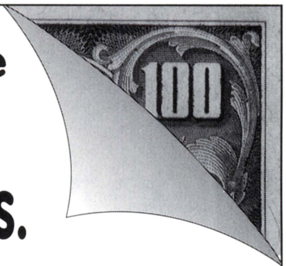
"For a $3 Cigarette Token, it's the only way to do business."

"We were using a system which had the "illusion of control" . . . The first shift manager counted all our Tokens. The third shift manager emptied all the cashboxes, and did a day-end count."

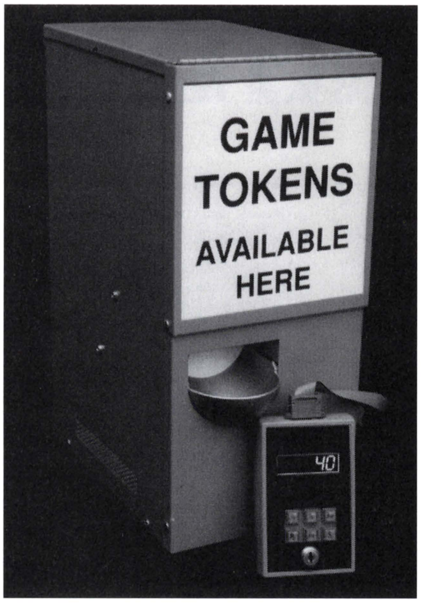
"The Token Tech has simplified our whole operation, and we know exactly where we stand every hour."

"We bought a similar item, made in Europe. It cost a lot more, but it never worked right, so we sent it back. Your Token Tech is far superior."

If you want to take more of these to the Bank every week . . .



Just Push the Right Buttons.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.882	9,000	1.000	7,500
.900	9,000	1.125	6,000

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Canadian 25¢	8,000	Venezuela 1 Bolivar	5,000
Australian 20¢	5,000	Chile 1 Peso	4,500
Canadian Dollar	6,000	Ecuador 1 Sucre	4,000

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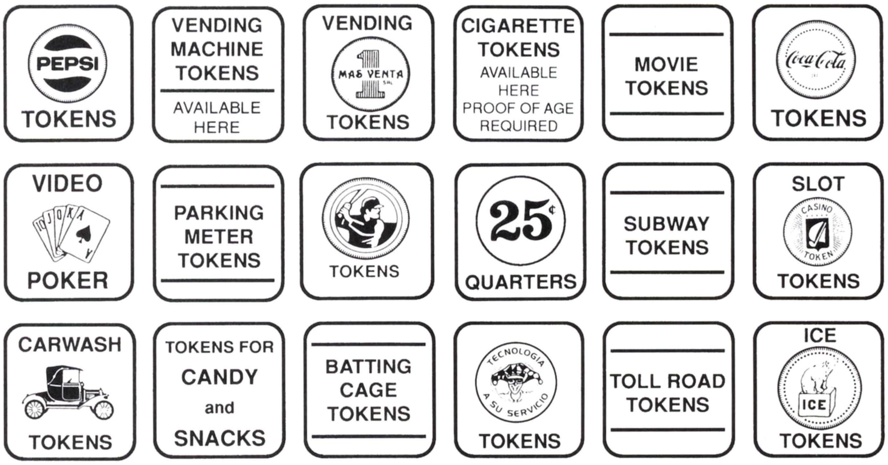
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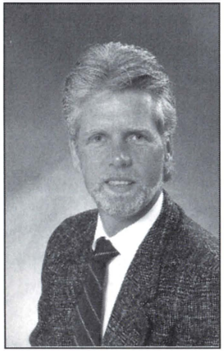
REDEMPTION
REPORT



STEVE
McCAUL

Considering the high price of equipment and the trend to large entertainment centers, the inevitable question arises:

Q: How can I compete in today's market?

A: One sure way to compete is to offer a variety of prizes through your redemption counter, better prizes than your competitor no matter how small or large the centers.

Here's a classic scenario: Two centers, side by side, offer the same redemption game equipment. Which one will be the most profitable? The center with the best prizes and the best service.

Redemption is timeless; the concept has not changed. This area alone can set you apart from any other game room or entertainment center. If you operate redemption now, or plan on getting into redemption in the future, the prize counter is the area that needs the most attention.

You should spend most of your time and effort continually improving the look of the counter, such as enlarging the display area or placing more showcases around your store to assure customer awareness. You should install a computer system that tracks the products being redeemed.

REASONS TO RETURN

This aspect of redemption is the most important: your redemption prize counter should look and feel like a retail store. You want people to come in and be in awe of the products you offer.

In order to stay competitive and set your location apart from your competition, your display and the merchandise you offer are the reasons customers will come back again and again.

Think about it and ask yourself these questions: Why do I go to a particular store for an item? Is it the price, the service? Is the product always available? The same thoughts should apply to the redemption business. Your customers want the same service and quality merchandise when they visit your redemption counters.

The prize counter is the place where many operators have trouble. This is an area that can always be improved. Most get stuck on offering only low-end prizes and the customers soon get bored.

STOCK THE RIGHT PRIZES

When you first start out it's OK to start low, but you should soon develop your prizes and offer larger ones. These better items are not going to leave your store daily; customers will accumulate tickets over time to win them. This is how you build your repeat customer base—they have to come back many times before they can redeem those larger prizes.

Following are some products you should consider for your redemption counter: **brand name candy, licensed goods such as Disney and Looney Tunes items, trendy items such as beanie babies, jewelry, collectible dolls, electronics, small household appliances, tools, movie equipment, autographed sports memorabilia, cameras, and cell phones.**

This is just a partial list. Don't be afraid to ask your customers what they would like to see. They'll be happy to tell you what they want—then go get it for them! This is a service you should provide. You can also check with your suppliers to find out what's hot or what new items are available.

A great way to encourage your customers to save for prizes is to give them a receipt for their tickets. Your employees should be advised to inform customers of this service. As a result the time spent at the counter will be less cumbersome and the customers will return to your location to add to the amount already earned.

Among the prize offerings at Ryan Family Amusements in Cape Cod, Mass., are kitchen appliances, small and large electronics, coolers, and jewelry.

Alone at Last

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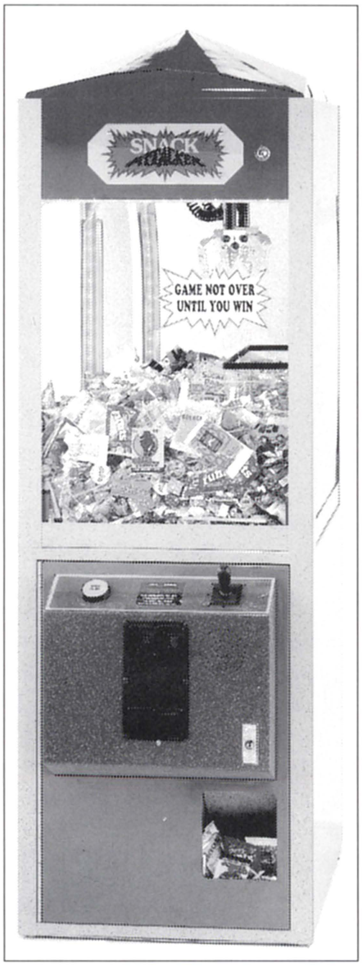

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At Happy House in Hampton Beach, N.H., the loaded redemption counter features everything from hand puppets to ceramic coffee mugs and TVs to bicycles.

The industry offers many units that can help you streamline this operation and achieve your goals. There are computer tracking systems programmed to monitor customers' activities. They track the amount of tickets saved and issue a receipt. There are a few machines on the market that count and shred the tickets and then issue a receipt for the total.

You can also design your own system and have your own preprinted receipts. There have been clients who reported to me that some of their customers are saving between 6,000 and 10,000 tickets! This will work if you have those special products on the shelf that players desire.

HERE'S A SHORT RECAP:

1. Constantly update your counter displays; there is always room for improvement.
2. It's essential to offer a variety of prizes; rely on your suppliers for ideas and communicate directly with your customers.
3. Purchase only quality items; customers don't like junk.
4. Always try to improve the service at your redemption counter.
5. If you are not giving out receipts you really should consider implementing a receipt system for your business.

Consistently working your prize counter will keep you competitive no matter what type of equipment comes on the market. If you can't afford to buy the big banks of driving games or expensive simulators, you can afford to buy one or two and then dedicate most of your attention to the redemption market.

Since redemption games cater to all ages and both genders you will be in business for many years to come. Redemption has been around a long time and will continue to be since it is truly timeless. ▲

Steve McCaul is a consultant and redemption specialist with his own company, Global Equipment Exchange, in Kingston, Mass., (617)585-8600; fax (617)585-8399. He can also be reached on the Internet (global-1@mail.idt.net).

TECHNICAL
TOPICS

RANDY
FROMM

PHANTOM VOLTAGE

A Play Meter Monthly Exclusive

Sometimes a critical bit of knowledge can go a long way when troubleshooting electronics. If you don't know that an electronic phenomenon exists, you cannot possibly be on the lookout for it.

However, once you know about something, you can consider it as a possible cause or symptom of your problem.

Case in point: I was working on a Williams pinball machine. It was a WPC95 system game with a dead +20 volt power supply. This is a conventional power supply with a step-down transformer, a bridge rectifier, and a filter capacitor. The +20 volt power supply is used to power the switched lamps in the lamp matrix. Because it is used for the lamps, it does not have to be regulated.

What could be simpler to troubleshoot? The LED on the power/driver board was not illuminated so that was a good indicator where the trouble was (duh . . .). I confirmed with a multimeter that the voltage was missing.

The next step was to check the fuse for that circuit. With the power to the game turned off, I used my meter to check the fuse. It was good.

Just to make sure, I used my meter to test all of the fuses in the litebox area of the game. Hey! You never know where you might be missing some important clue as to what's wrong with the game. Might as well take a minute to cover your butt. They all tested good.

My next move was to measure the low-voltage AC input that connects to the four diodes that form the bridge rectifier circuit for the power supply. For this test the power must be turned on and the multimeter set to measure AC voltage. I pulled the connector off the board and measured the AC voltage at the connector. I had SOME AC voltage. I had around 9 volts AC.

That's a bit low for the AC input to a +20 volt DC power supply. I had expected around 14.14 volts. That's the RMS average for a peak of 20 volts or .707 X 20 = 14.14 for those of you that just HAVE to look at the math. If that last sentence didn't make any sense to you, don't sweat it. Let's just say it was low and leave it at that.

This was very unusual because I was measuring the AC voltage that was coming out of the secondary winding of the power transformer and the other secondary outputs of the transformer were all working (the +5 volt regulated power supply, for example.) It has been my experience that transformers are go/no-go devices. They either work or they don't. I've never seen a low voltage output caused by failure of a transformer's secondary winding. Likewise, I knew the primary winding of the transformer is okay because the + 5 volt and other power supplies were good.

And yet, I was measuring 9 volts AC at the connector so I had SOME voltage coming out of the transformer. Or did I???? I had measured the voltage with the connector removed from the board, making certain I had direct connection to the connector pins by inserting the thin meter probes into the connector itself. Seems a logical thing to do, doesn't it? Actually, this was where I had made a mistake. By removing the connector, I had removed all load from the secondary winding. Since the input impedence of the digital multimeter is measured in megohms, the meter itself provided no load either.

But load (or lack thereof) notwithstanding, what happened to the 14 volts AC, what was actually wrong with the game and when the heck is Randy Fromm going to get to the point of this story?

OK . . . Here it comes. There was nothing wrong with the game. The power interlock switch that disconnects the solenoid and lamp power when the coin door is open was in the off position and I had neglected to notice it. Oops. But wait . . . If the power interlock switch was open, WHERE DID THE 9 VOLTS AC COME FROM??? And so, my friends, herein lies the dark and mysterious tale of the "Phantom Currents."

Phantom currents and mystery voltages may come from a phenomenon called leakage. While there is a detailed mathematical explanation, let's just take a look at the practical application and how it affects troubleshooting. Leakage refers to an infinitessimally small amount of electric current that finds its way across the most unlikely paths. For example, when a switch is in the off or open position, there is absolutely no connection between the switch contacts. However, imagine that this switch is in a piece of equipment that is located at a seaside resort.

Imagine a fine mist of salt spray that fills the air and deposits itself on the outside of the switch. This salt water conducts electricity pretty well. A thin layer of salt water spray will create a path for electric current BETWEEN THE TERMINALS OF THE SWITCH as opposed to current flowing between the terminals themselves. Leakage can come from other sources as well such as a layer of smoke particles or other contaminants.

Because the molecules-thick film has a high resistance (in the megohms) the amount of current flowing across it is very small. It is therefore referred to as leakage current. But because the input impedance of a digital multimeter is also measured in megohms (so as not to "load" a sensitive circuit when taking measurements) the meter readily picks up the leakage current and presents it to you on the display. It is now your job as a technician to determine if the reading is a legitimate voltage reading or if you're looking at a phantom voltage: leakage.

Here's where experience and intuition really help me a lot. When I suspect I am looking at leakage rather then real voltage (such as in this case where the voltage reads low in a situation where it's not really a possible or likely failure mode) I try touching my fingers to the metal meter probes themselves as opposed to holding the meter probes by their insulated handles. This puts my skin resistance (typically 300k or so) across the circuit. This resistance acts as a bit of a load.

If I'm looking at real voltage, the reading will be unaffected by my skin resistance. However, if I'm looking at leakage instead, the voltage will drop to zero as soon as I touch the probes.

Naturally, you don't want to do this with high voltages but, to be honest, I have done this many times in the past when I'm working on 120 volt AC circuits with a bit of a leakage problem somewhere. A typical cause is where a video or redemption piece in a wooden cabinet sits directly on the floor without leg levelers or wheels and the night cleaning crew swabs the deck using a rag mop laden with copious quantities of soapy water. The water is absorbed by the wooden cabinet causing all kinds of potential electrical problems.

In this case, I might read 120 volts AC between two points that are not supposed to be connected in any way. I might look at this as a leakage reading and momentarily touch the two meter probes with my fingers. If I feel a shock, it's "real" (and how . . .) but if I do not, the voltage will drop to zero and I'll know I'm looking at leakage instead. HOWEVER, I acknowledge that this is probably a pretty stupid and unsafe thing to do, especially now that I have my new best friend; my new digital multimeter, the Fluke model 11.

Fluke model 11

The Fluke model 11 is my meter of choice for coin-op servicing for a number of reasons. It is an auto-ranging meter so I don't have to fiddle with setting the proper range each time I move to a new measurement. It is fully protected against overloads. It measures capacitance. It tests diodes and transistors. It makes coffee (just kidding.)

But most of all, the Fluke model 11 has a nifty feature called V-Check. The V-Check feature makes using the meter practically a no-brainer as far as testing is concerned. When you set the Fluke model 11 to the V-Check setting, the meter is first set to measure resistance. However, it looks for voltage in the circuit as well and if it sees voltage (AC or DC) it automatically switches to display the voltage reading instead. Pretty neat huh?

But what does this have to do with detecting leakage? Well, in the normal voltage test, the input impedence of the meter is megohms but in the V-Check mode, the input impedence is just 2K! That's just 2,000 ohms and that presents enough of a load to suck any leakage current down to zero volts. By using the V-Check mode when looking for power problems, you'll never be confused by leakage currents again because you'll never see them to begin with!

The Fluke Model 11 sells for just $79.95 (another reason it's my meter of choice) and is available from just about any good electronics retailer. I got mine from industry supplier Partstar (division of industry giant Resource Electronics), 746 Vermont Ave., Palatine, IL 60067; phone: (847) 934-9573; Fax: (847) 359-4725.

That's all for this month. Remember Play Meter Magazine and a plethora of other valuable resources are available on-line at the best Web site in the industry, (randyfromm.com). See you at the Arcade School! ▲

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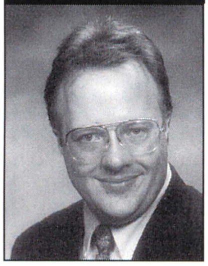
TICKET
TECH

What exactly *is* the WEB?



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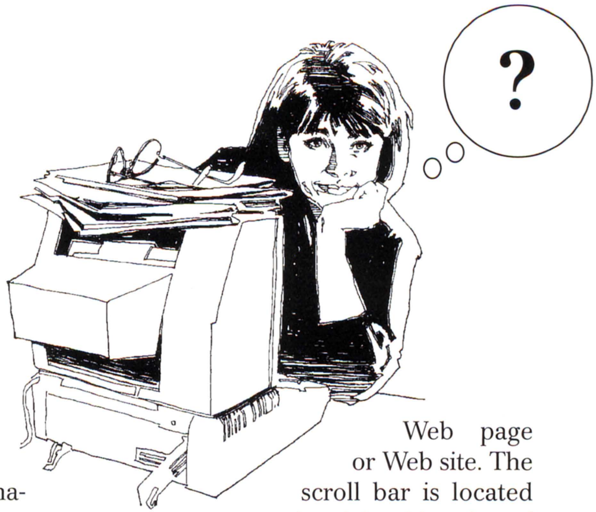


The Web, otherwise known as the World Wide Web (WWW), the Information Super Highway, The Net, or Internet, is a new (less than 10 years old) way to locate a person, place, or product. After you have searched and found the information you require, you can purchase it using a credit card, request more information, or just chat on some Web sites.

Others let you fill out a guest book or complete some sort of survey. Yes, the new buzz word for business is the Web, which could simply be described as an informational brochure for business with sound and graphics your potential customers view with their computer. But many are confused as to what the Web is and how to use it to its full potential.

Listed below is a short description of the various Web words and what they mean. If you are not a computer nerd, don't know techno talk, or if you are not sure about the Web, but want to know more, these descriptions are for you.

America Online (AOL): A commercial online service that provides its members access to the Internet, in addition to other features. Prodigy and CompuServe vary in services but are almost identical to AOL.

Archie: No, not a cartoon character for the Web, but an application that allows you to easily search for information at anonymous FTP sites on the Internet.

Bookmark: A part of the Web browser that will let you store your favorite Web places (URL) for easier retrieval at a later date.

Browser: Software that is easily purchased or downloaded from the Web and used by you and your computer to view Web sites. Several browsers are available. Netscape Navigator (formerly Mosaic), Microsoft Internet Explorer (MSIE) are the most popular. America Online is not a net browser by itself, but uses a version of MSIE.

Clickable Image: A picture of a graphic that can be clicked with your mouse for more information. A blue border sometimes surrounds the picture.

Clickable Text: Same as a clickable image but with text instead of a picture or graphic. Text on a Web site that is blue (in most cases) can be clicked by your computer mouse for more information on that item.

Domain Name: The URL or address of your Web site (http://www.mycompany.com).

FTP: File Transfer Protocol is a format of transferring files between hosts on the Internet.

Home Page: The starting point for a single Web site; the first page.

Host Name: The same thing as URL

HTML: Hyper Text MarkUp Language. It's the computer language used to create Web sites and Web pages.

http://: Hyper Text Transport Protocol is the format of how the information you requested is sent.

Image Map: A picture on a Website that has several points for a mouse to click on. An example would be a map with cities. Each city contains different information. Use a mouse to click on for more information. No blue border is present around this image.

ISP: Internet Service Provider, a company that specializes in connecting you up to the Net through your phone line. You must have a Browser to use this service.

Link: Or Hyper Link. When you click your mouse on text or an image you are sent to a URL or Web address. Could be more information about that product or something completely different.

Online: This is opposed to being off line. When you are online you are on the Net.

One Link Wonder: A web site that contains only one useful link

Scrolling: Moving the gray scroll bar to gather more information about hat Web page or Web site. The scroll bar is located on the right side edge of the screen. Sometimes a scroll bar is located across the bottom. scrolling for info on a Web page is considered prehistoric. It's also a sign of a poorly designed Web site.

Search Engine: Part of the Web that lets you search for a certain company, item, or product. There are over 20 search engines on the Web. Some of the most popular ones are Lycos, WebCrawler, and Yahoo. For example, enter "clip art" into WebCrawler and 97,456 URL Web sites with that matching description appear. Just click your mouse and go. The URL for Yahoo is (http://www.yahoo.com).

Sub Domain name: Like a domain name but not a prestige. It's also a URL or Web site, (http://www/awebplace.com/second webplace.com/third webplace.com).

Surfing the Net: Looking and finding interesting information that is available. With the clickable text and images you can go from one thing to another and find interesting links.

URL: It means Universal Resource Locator or Uniform Resource Location. The address on the net of a company or person usually listed as (http://www.company.com). Also see Web site.

Web: An interlocking maze of home pages and Web sites.

Web Site: A place on the Web where people go to find information about you or your company. It's like a URL or Web site address.

This is just a partial list of the most common Web words. There is more information about the Internet and the Web. Just search "web info" or check your local book store or library. If you have questions on the WWW or the Net I can be reached at (http://members.aol.com/ticketvic) or at VICCO Electronics (619)322-4000. ▲

BATTLE TECH

A lesson in BUILDING the do-all test bench

LARRY MUNDAY

During my many years of being a technician in the gaming industry, I have had several occasions to build test benches for different companies I've been employed by. Each one was better than the one before.

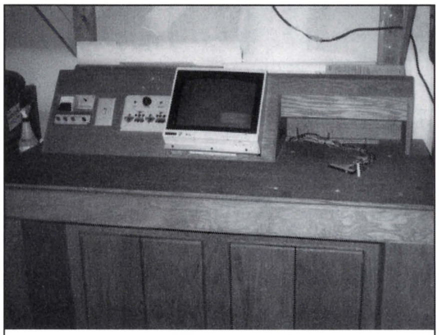
The first one I built was before the introduction of the JAMMA harness. This made it difficult to hook up a board because the pin out to the edge connector was different on every game. The first bench was nothing more than an old video game cabinet (*Frogger*, I think) which was stripped of its wooden front including the coin door. Then a sliding drawer was installed in its place. On the drawer I placed quick connect speaker wire terminals for every wire that goes to an edge connector (power, monitor, speakers, coin and test switches, and control panel buttons). Hue-wee! What a lot of connections.

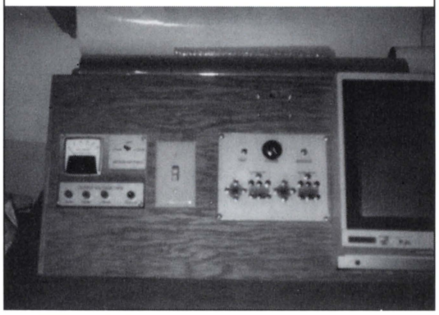
Thank goodness those days are gone. My latest test bench was constructed from an old professor's lecture bench, which I acquired from a university auction for $10. My first step was adding a new 13" RGB monitor from Wells-Gardner to the fine oak plywood bench.

To the left of the monitor is a small control panel, made with 22 miniature momentary switches and one potentiometer attached to a piece of Lexan. The Lexan is then screwed to the bench. The control panel is laid out just like a game panel (only smaller). In place of the joysticks are eight miniature momentary switches representing the up, down, left, and right for each joystick and 12 more switches for the kick and punch buttons. At the top of the panel is a pushbutton for the coin switch and test switch. In the center is a dial for the volume control.

To the left of the control panel is a household light switch which serves as a main power switch. To its left is the external power connections (+5, -5, +12, and ground). These connections come straight from the power supply and attach to quick connect terminals. These terminals serve as a power source for items you are testing which may not plug into a JAMMA harness, like motors or bill acceptors.

Above these terminals is a voltage meter which can measure the +5 or +12 of the output terminals. A selector switch determines which post is being measured. This comes in handy to observe the voltage drops of the equipment on your bench and insures that there is an output at the terminal.





If I am testing a monitor pulled from a game, there is a pigtail for the RGB/comp sync and a pigtail for the isolated 120vac. These are external connections which come directly from the monitor installed in the bench. I also have several adapters for the power connection, so any monitor I may be working on can easily be plugged in.

To the right of the monitor is the JAMMA harness for testing game boards. In the case of testing Capcom's A/B board sets, there is also an additional pigtail. The game being tested can be displayed on the built-in monitor or can serve as a test signal for a monitor you are working on.

Above the JAMMA harness connector is a line of quick connect terminals which serve as hook up points for non-JAMMA harnesses. This way I can still test my *Pac-Man* and other non-JAMMA boards.

If you are planning to build your own do-all test bench, I hope you can use some or all of the examples I have shown here. If you have any ideas that I did not cover, please let me know so that I may include them into my bench.

I can be reached via e-mail (batletec@aol.com) or fax (208)322-7515. ▲

VALLEY GOLD

stops in California and Ohio

Valley Recreation Products has launched the $250,000 Valley Gold Tour with the completion of its first two regional stops in Carson, Calif., and Cleveland, Ohio, respectively.

The California stop saw more than 400 players from Valley operator run local events, while Cleveland's tournament drew close to 600 competitors. Players at the regional level compete for cash and prizes, including tickets to the North American Championships, as well as clothing and electronics and the possibility to participate in the Team USA international contest.

"The Valley Gold Tour is one player's wont want to miss," said Valley vice president of promotions Dave Courington. " As you can tell, there are many exciting prizes players can win, as well as one-of-a-kind fun events like the $5,000 Toss."

Here's a look at the final results.

CALIFORNIA

Draw Your Partner: 1st–Doc Edwards and Tim Saunders; 2nd–Ricky Trejo and Jeff Hubbards; 3rd–Teena Marie Cunningham and Jeff Moon.

Go For The Gold: 1st–Doug Whaley; 2nd–Mike Larue; 3rd–Teena Marie Cunningham.

Men's Team USA: 1st–Mike Larue; 2nd–Mark Evans; 3rd–Doug Whaley.

Women's Team USA: 1st–Kathy Johnson; 2nd–Peg Quezada; 3rd–Chris Savala.

Open Double's: 1st–Doc Edwards and Mark Evans; 2nd–Gilbert Ontiveros and Juan Madrigal; 3rd–Brian Howes and Make Larue.

Women's Singles: 1st–Teena Marie Cunningham; 2nd–Claudia Limon; 3rd–Missy Burbridge.

Men's Singles: 1st–Ralph Chavez; 2nd–Doug Whaley; 3rd–Juan Devo Madrigal.

Women's Doubles: 1st–Barbara Flores and Teena Marie Cunningham; 2nd–Sandy Frantz and Peg Quezada; 3rd–Christie Savala and Mary Hubbard.

Mixed Triples: 1st–Juan Madrigal, Jose Alderet, and Teena Marie Cunningham; 2nd–Ralph Chavez, Tomas Espano, and Stephanie Geiger; 3rd–Mike Larue, Brian Howes, Sandy Frantz.

Second Chance Open Doubles: 1st–Dean Evans and David Carbajal; 2nd–Joe Fawaz and Andy Gorman; 3rd–Tim Saunders and Jess Sotelo.

Second Chance Open Singles: 1st–Ron Comas; 2nd–Michael Jusko; 3rd–David Carlisles.

Second Chance Women's Doubles: 1st–Kathy Johnson and Linda Endo; 2nd–Jane Ruetze and Chris Saunders; 3rd–Carol Russell and Frances Trevine.

Second Chance Women's Singles: 1st–Janine Behme; 2nd–Tiffany Van Kirk; 3rd–Kathy Johnson.

Second Chance Mixed Triples: 1st–Mary Hubbard, Jeff Hubbard, and Tony Gisborne; 2nd–Margaret Barker, Dano Roark, and Michael Jusko; 3rd–Jesse Garcia, Carol Russell, and Ernie Sandoval.

OHIO

Draw Your Partner (Thurs): 1st–Wade Wilcox and Penny Vargo; 2nd–Jim Miller and Troy Karcher; 3rd–Cindy Hyatt and Gary Schmidt.

Draw Your Partner (Fri.): 1st–Mark Hollingsworth and Jeff Gilbert; 2nd–Randy Morton and Stan Helms; 3rd–Toby Beets and George Schubert.

Draw Your Partner (Last Chance): 1st–Shawn Brenneman and Chris Ruby; 2nd–Jim Miller and Ron Gifford; 3rd–Jeff Blausey and Stan Helms.

Go For The Gold: 1st–Todd Kurtz; 2nd–Tim Tegel; 3rd–Randy Morton.

Women's Team USA: 1st–Pam Dischler; 2nd–Carolyn Nessmann; 3rd–Penny Vargo.

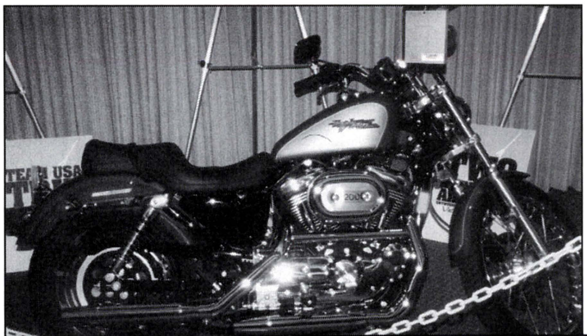
Open Double's: 1st–Todd Kurtz and Tim Tegel; 2nd–Wade Wilcox and G.R. Verner; 3rd–Steve Sears and Ken Cameron.

Women's Singles: 1st–Shawni Greenleaf; 2nd–Pam Dischler; 3rd–Carolyn Nessmann.

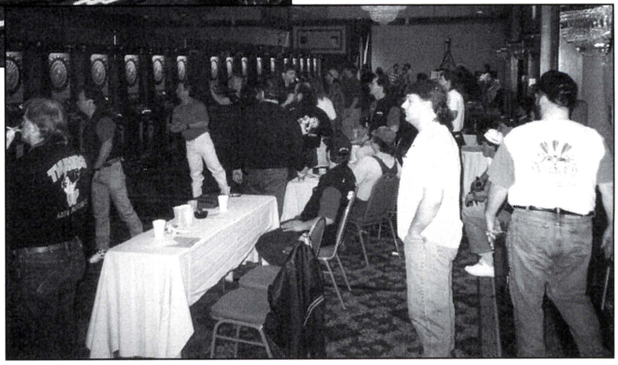
Open Singles: 1st–Frank Pratt; 2nd–Tim Tegel; 3rd–Gary Carpenter.

Women's Doubles: 1st–Pam Dischler and Carolyn Nessmann; 2nd–Ginny Verner and Shawni Greenleaf; 3rd–Alicia Twining and Kristy Knepper.

Mixed Triples: 1st–Carolyn Nessmann, Todd Kurtz, and Tim Tegal; 2nd–Jeffrey Newell, James Meeker, and Pam Dischler; 3rd–Lori Christopher, Bruce Cottrell, and Frank Pratt. ▲



Left: This Harley Davidson was up for grabs at the Valley Gold regional in Carson, Calif.



Right: Tournament action was heavy throughout the weekend in Cleveland, Ohio.

VALLEY TOUR PICKS UP speed in final months

The new Valley Gold Tour with its restructured three-level format continued to gain enthusiasm and participation as it entered the final months. Operators across the country are sponsoring local tournaments to qualify darters for Team USA and Go for the Gold events at a series of regional Tour stops.

Here's a look at some of the latest operator qualifiers:

Illinois: Held a week apart, dual qualifiers sponsored by K Amusements and Tournament saw 22 players compete in Glendal Heights and Palantine. Winners were Bill Dahms and Dawn Tipp.

Colorado: A field of 53 players met at an event in Greeley sponsored by High Country/TD Rowe. Coming out on top were Elsie Abby, Dwayne Higgins, and David Golden. A second event in Pueblo, sponsored by Soaring Darts and Billiards, produced a quartet of winners—Leon Salazar, Scott Lundenberg, Darla Martinez, and Lisa Salazar.

Iowa: Cedar Rapids was the site of a qualifier held by Camden Amusements and Vending. Winners included Chris Sankot, Brad Suarez, Wendy Wermerskirchen, Chris Sankot, Cara Turri, Trent Heath, Rick Rigel, Debbie Steffany, and Rich Luders.

Valley Gold completes third tour stop in Denver

Valley Recreation Products continued its successful $250,000 Valley Gold Tour with the third of six national tour stops. The $20,000 regional tournament in Denver, Colo.,was held at the Radison Denver South and open to all who wanted to participate.

The Men's and Women's Team USA events were open to those who competed in a Valley operator-run qualifier; the top 32 from Denver will be eligible to compete in the Team USA event at this year's $150,000 North American Championships, July 18-20, in Minneapolis, Minn.

Friday night rang in the introduction of Valley's two new speed games, Rapid Fire and Stopwatch, found on the new *Cougar 8* and *Cougar IQ* and introduced to players through specialty mini events. When the events were over, Paul Lim set the record in the competition against the clock on both games.

Go for the Gold competitors also competed for the top 32 spots and a pass to the North American Championships. This event is also open only to players who competed in an operator-run tournament. The Denver event concluded with a $5,000 Toss Shoot-Out in which Paul Lim also emerged as the winner.

"The Valley Gold Tour is one players won't want to miss," said Valley vice president of promotions Dave Courington. "Our focus is upon generating fun and excitement in new ways for dart players. As you can tell, there are many exciting prizes players can win, as well as one-of-a-kind fun events like the $5,000 Toss!"

Here's a look a the final results:

Go for the Gold: 1st—Paul Lim; 2nd—Shawn Downs; 3rd—Dan Moore.

Men's Team USA: 1st—Paul Lim; 2nd—Dan Moore; 3rd—Shawn Downs.

Women's Team USA: 1st—Teenamarie Cunningham; 2nd—Cathy Taft; 3rd—Brenda Mathern.

Women's Singles: 1st—Teenamarie Cunningham; 2nd—Corinne Wilmore; 3rd—Darla Martinez.

Women's Doubles: 1st—Teenamarie Cunningham and Barbara Flores; 2nd—Corinne Wilmore and Philip Ezit; 3rd—Cathy Taft and Stacy Edwards.

Open Singles: 1st—Paul Lim; 2nd—Bobby Solitys; 3rd—Lucky Newberry.

Open Doubles: 1st—Paul Lim and Shawn Downs; 2nd—Ron Comsas and Tom Romandi; 3rd—Kevin Blackmer and Ian Hartwell.

Draw Your Partner: 1st—Tony Langford and Ian Hartwell; 2nd—Bobby Solitys and Joel Kilbourn; 3rd—Eric Sammonson and Francis Salarzar.

Mixed Triples: 1st—Cunningham, Lim, and Downs; 2nd—Johnson, Taylor, and Wizard; 3rd—Salazar, Soto, and Gallegos.

Second Chance Events

Open Doubles: 1st—Eric Hutto and Wade Lay; 2nd—Mike Hamilton and Colin Gartner; 3rd—Leroy Espinoza and Robert Burcham.

Open Singles: 1st—Francis Salarzar; 2nd—Eric Hutton; 3rd—Dan Moore.

Women's Singles: 1st—Dondi Pulse; 2nd—Teri Taylor; 3rd—Marie Pearson.

Women's Doubles: 1st—Darla Martinez and Lori Pfannenschmid; 3rd—Brenda Mathern and Erin Pellant; 3rd—Marguerite Crowell and Valerie Marchiani.

Master Singles winner Bill Hughes (r) and runner-up Ray Turner (l) in Glassport, Pa.

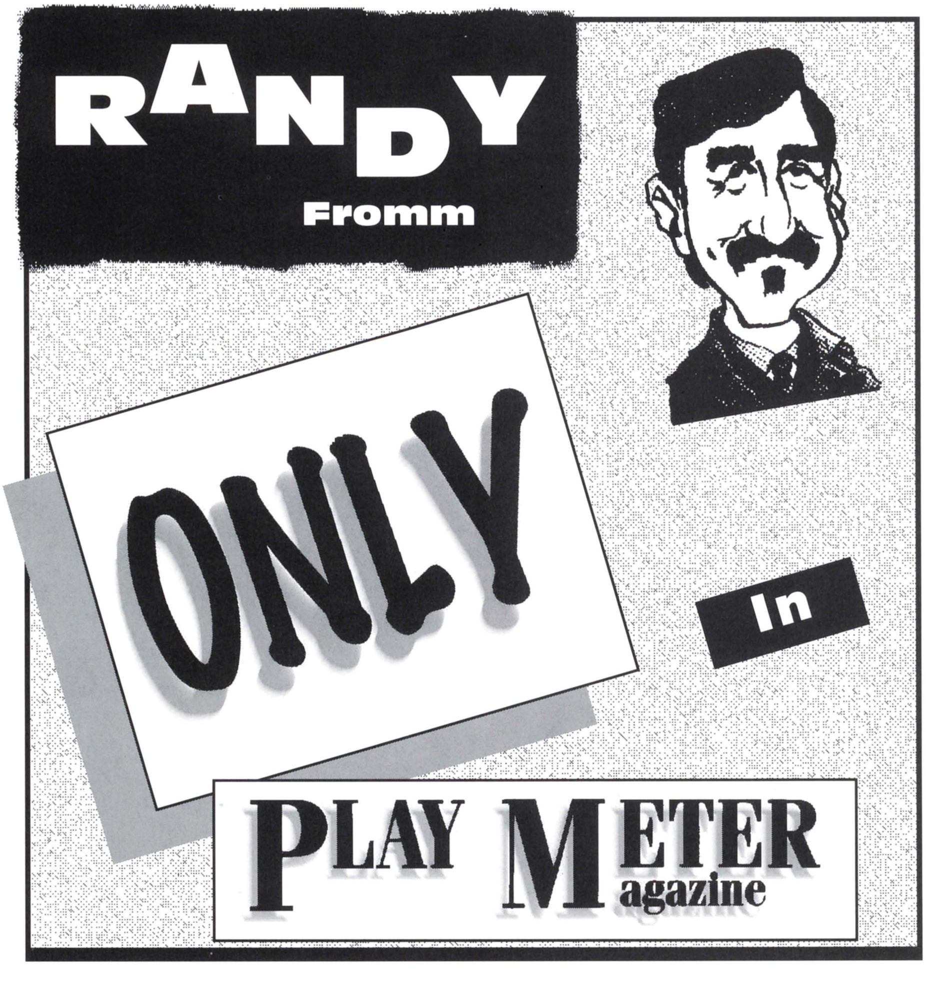
Minnesota: Two men and two women—Steve March, Dean Willson, Doroth Roemhildt, and Lisa Toms—stood alone at the top when the qualifier sponsored by D & R/Star came to an end in Austin.

Florida: The combined efforts of C & M Darts and 301 Vending resulted in a mega-qualifier in Tampa. The result was an imposing list of winners: T.J. May, Mike Gibbons, Mickey Charniak, Tim Estes, John Sheehan, Tom Bullock, Bob Harvey, Kevin Kelly, Meradith McGee, Lynn Mateer, Arlene Broadbeck, Patty Arden, Teresa Francis, Mike Slocumb, Rich Hruda, Cindy Stepp, Keith Carpiota, Jean Gifford, and Joy Coyott.

Pennsylvania: Winners from the Keystone State, at a qualifier sponsored by Murray Amusements in Glassport, were: Ray Turner, Sam Gauker, and Sue Bartko.

Wisconsin: Midstate Amusement Games in Oshkosh produced two winners: Rick Schuppe and Natalie Hanson.

For more information, contact the Valley Gold Tour Committee, (888)868-7465. ▲

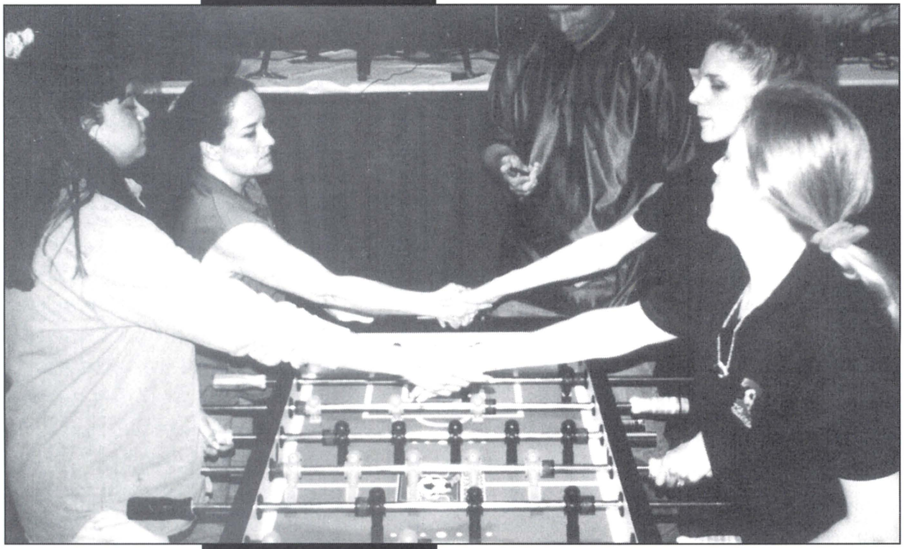


1ST PLACE
CHAMPS

Men's Singles winner Rick Schuppe in Oshkosh, Wis.

Valley foosball tour holds U.S. Open event

The Women's Doubles finals, (l-r): Kathy Richey, Diane Park, Tiffany Moore, and Caryn Varadinek.



Open Doubles final competition, (l-r): Russ King, Scott Wydman, Tommy Adkisson, and Robert Mares.

The second stop of the 1997 Valley Foosball tour, the $40,000 U.S. Open held in St. Louis, turned out to be an unbelievable three-day competition featuring record-setting participation.

An estimated 500 players from all over the country were on hand, and almost every event during the weekend boasted the largest player attendance of any non-world foosball championship held on the Tornado Table Soccer Tour.

One of the most notable performances of the weekend included Atlanta's Chris Weaver, who won the Tournament MVP award by finishing first in Semi-Pro Doubles, second in the Pro-Am, and first in the Table Playoff. Weaver took home a brand-new Tornado home foosball table for winning the playoff.

The next stop on the tour, the Masters Open in Atlanta, was scheduled for May 23-26 at the Airport Hilton. For more information on the Valley Foosball Tour or any upcoming Valley events, call toll free (888)868-7465.

Here's a look at the final results:

Open Doubles: 1st–Tommy Adkisson of Oklahoma and Robert Mares of Colorado; 2nd–Russ King of Louisiana and Scott Wydman of Colorado; 3rd–Mike Cody of Florida and Don Chalifoux of Illinois.

Open Singles: 1st–Tom Yore of Florida; 2nd–Dave Gummeson of Minnesota; 3rd–Terry Moore of Illinois.

Women's Doubles: 1st–Kathy Richey and Diane Park, both of Oklahoma; 2nd–Tiffany Moore of Illinois and Caryn Varadinek of New York; 3rd–Christina Fuchs of California and Liz Hill of Oklahoma.

Women's Singles: 1st–Cindy Head of Alabama; 2nd–Tiffany Moore of Illinois; 3rd–Stephanie Dean of Oklahoma. ▲

WHAT'S NEW

Win Fabulous Prizes
SHOWCASE
SHOWCASE

SHOWCASE MAGNETIC CRANE

Smart Industries presents the *Showcase Magnetic Crane* which will challenge players to target a magnet to pick up premium merchandise displayed on the adjustable solid stainless steel shelves. The ability to change the size of the shelves should open up cranes to a whole new range of merchandise, the company says.

The tubular-style frame inside the cabinet provides the needed level of security as well as stylish aesthetics associated with the *Clean Sweep* line of cranes. The *Showcase* boasts many of the same standard features: rope lights, motion/action sound, dollar bill acceptor with 400 bill stacker, Photo Curtain prize detection, and a self diagnostics system. An optional top marquee for high visibility and other options are available.

Showcase is available in the following sizes: CS34 (34-1/2" wide x 39-1/2" deep x 78-1/4" high holding 74 pieces of merchandise); CS42 (42" wide x 39-1/2" deep x 78-1/4" high holding 95 pieces of merchandise); CS60 Single (60" wide x 39-1/2" deep x 78" high holding 151 pieces of merchandise); and the CS60 Double Half & Half with one console for the *Showcase Magnetic Crane* and the other for a standard *Clean Sweep* plush crane.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Smart Industries, 1626 Delaware Ave., Des Moines, IA 50317; (515)265-9900 or (800)553-2442; fax (515)265-3148.

MACE
The Dark Age

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MACE: THE DARK AGE

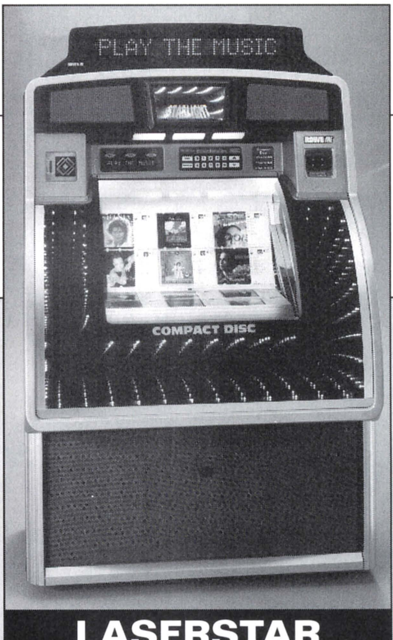
Atari Games introduces *Mace: The Dark Age*, a powerful new 3-D fighting game with a rich medieval theme. The game will be available in limited quantities in a 25" upright cabinet, followed this month by the release of the universal JAMMA-compatible kit.

Utilizing hardware designed around 3Dfx's Voodoo Graphics chipset, *Mace* features 10 intriguing player-selectable characters with two bosses and an additional six hidden characters, five of which will be time-released.

Many innovative features make their debut in *Mace*, including 3-D character movement; true multilevel playfields with ledges, steps, and ramps; dangerous arena boundaries such as lava, quicksand, fire, spikes, and deep water; and interactive and throwable playfield objects such as tents, urns, and tables.

Using a joystick and four buttons, even novice players will be able to do some powerful moves such as throws and projectiles, while trying to pull off some of the more devastating combos and counterattacks that make *Mace* a player standout. A secret finishing move for each character will ensure that players will spend time practicing to pull off the perfect victory.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Atari Games, 675 Sycamore Dr., Milpitas, CA 95035; (408)434-3700; fax (408)434-3776.



LASERSTAR STARLIGHT

Rowe Intl. unveils its new *LaserStar StarLight* jukebox that showcases a dazzling infinity light show that is certain to attract players.

Twelve full-sized CD jackets are displayed beside easy-to-read title strips. The motor-driven pages flip vertically for easier reading and will accommodate up to 100 CD albums and title strips.

Optional: a programmable scrolling LED attract mode message center with 2" tall characters and a CDV karaoke add-on kit. Dimensions are 61" high x 41" wide x 26-1/2" deep.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Rowe Intl., 1500 Union Ave. S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49507; (616)243-3633; fax (616)243-4700.

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Touch the Gold
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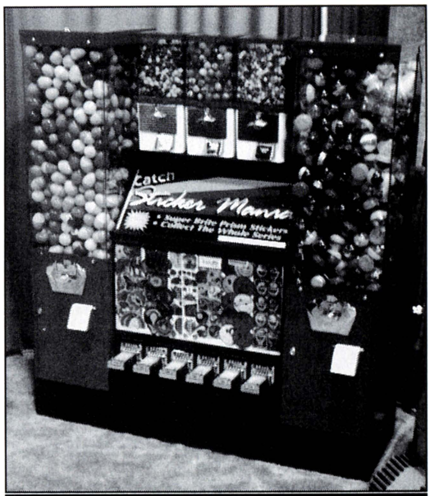
TOUCH THE GOLD

Tekbilt announces the release of *Touch the Gold*, a multi-game touch screen video lottery terminal that has 16 games in its main menu including five slot games, four poker games, two keno games, two lotto games, one pull tab game, one bingo game, and one blackjack game.

All games have state-of-the-art graphics, sound, high-tech individual game option settings, and extensive accountability. The game comes in an all-metal casino-style cabinet with a progressive bonus display.

Custom software and configurations, multiple languages, international coin and currency acceptance, hoppers, cashless systems, online systems, and slot and player tracking systems are available.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Tekbilt Inc., 3983 Mann Road, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006; (215)322-3238 or (800)322-3238; fax (215)322-3238.



MAYONI VENDING CENTER

Mayoni Enterprises presents a new modular vending center with a compact and versatile bracket set that allows operators to place a variety of machines on location in an appealing and organized manner.

The vending center features two *Dinovend*'s alongside a sticker machine and a row of impulse machines or bulk vendors. The *Dinovend*'s have the capability to vend 1" capsules; 850-count gum, rubber balls, or eggs; or 2" capsules at either 25 or 50 cents.

Mayoni has designed the bracket to accommodate the Peninsula four or six column machines, but it can easily be modified for the placement of other sticker machines. The top bracket can hold up to three small bulk vendors or two impulse machines. This unit allows the operator to build a unit to the location's desired specifications or use their existing machines in a new manner with minimal investment.

The brackets are made from heavy-duty 16-gauge CRS with a powder coat finish and built-in wheels for easy mobility for the back-loading machines.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Mayoni Enterprises, 10340 Glenoaks Blvd., Pacoima, CA 91331; (818)899-2488; fax (818)899-0152.

CYBERTUNE

Cybertainment Systems Corp. announces plans to introduce a completely computerized downloadable jukebox that can easily be installed into virtually any existing jukebox cabinet. The system uses Windows 95 as its operating platform.

The system uses tools readily available in the market today, and the music is converted from the audio format on standard CDs to a digital format. Once converted, compressed, and encrypted it is stored on the host system, making the music useless to anyone else.

Cybertainment says it has secured the rights to provide digitized music from the recording industry and is currently paying the required royalties; it has also secured approval from the Jukebox License Office.

To handle payment, the company has developed a software interface between the Coinco bill validator and the PC using Windows 95. Other product features include advertising potential, internal background music switch, and internal as well as Internet functions for ordering new songs. The initial songs are provided on a removable disc drive.

The company also plans to offer retrofit kits, as well as no-cabinet wall-mount systems, mobile disc jockey units, and a CD kiosk designed to produce audio CDs with the music and artists of the customer's choice.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Cybertainment Systems Corp., 1200 S. Congress Ave., #49WH, West Palm Beach, FL 33406; (561)966-4534; fax (561)966-9134.

WHAT'S NEW

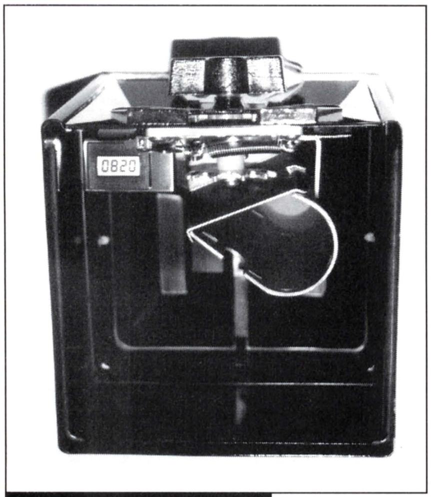
DIGITIK

Creative Electronic Services announces Digitik, a paperless ticket emulator which successfully replicates ticket payout and eliminates the hassle of counting endless streams of tickets.

Features include compatibility with all major brand ticket dispensers, five-digit display that counts up to 99,999 tickets, adjustable speed, harness for Deltronic 1275, and a one-year warranty.

For more information, contact Creative Electronics and Software, 650 Sundown Road, S. Elgin, IL 60177; (847)695-0023; fax (847)695-0483.

EZ COUNT



Nova Resolution Industries presents EZ Count, a new digital coin counter that allows operators to know how much money was deposited into their vending equipment. This method was only previously available on AC powered amusement equipment, or with the use of expensive mechanical devices.

Now this digital equipment is an acceptable solution for non-AC powered vending equipment including generic lines from most manufacturers. By next year the company will make available an EZ Count unit that will work with 98 percent of non-AC powered vending equipment.

The unit will derive exact collection amounts, individual machine income, and total collection per location, as well as per region or cycle. When combined with settings legend for individual machines, product tracking will be computed.

EZ Count consists of an LCD with a micro-controller and a miniature counting mechanism attached to a mounting base. This assembly permits one-step installation directly into the machine's coin mech.

For more information, contact Nova Resolution Industries, P.O. Box 240, Bronx, NY 10461; (718)792-6099; fax (718)863-1778,

JUMBO PRE-PACK

King Plush presents its 100 percent licensed jumbo pre-pack with a stellar lineup of new products including: Disney hand puppets, Disney action gear watches, Cabbage Patch Kids, Barbie pets, Disney squeezies, the Pink Panther, Alf, and Tiny Toon characters.

These newest licensed pieces are ideal for crane machines and redemption and will add to the company's already extensive line of product that includes Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse, Donald Duck, Winnie the Pooh, Pinnochio, Flipper, Muppets, and Dalmations.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact King Plush, P. O. Box 4428, Carson, CA 90749; (310)834-0499 or (800)473-3402; fax (310)834-7905.

SUPER ROUTE MANAGER 97

Premier Data Corp. has introduced the newest version of its Windows-based route management software, Super Route Manager 97, which is designed to take advantage of the 32-bit environment and operate at maximum performance.

In an effort to simplify the entry process, the software provides the customer with installation wizards guiding them through all the initial settings and major functions. The new version also provides software solutions to the vending and arcade industry.

Premier Data has also introduced its CD Manager 97, which comes complete with new jukebox download capabilities and a 20,000 CD data base. Using a barcode scanner, the CDs are easily entered into inventory. CD Manager 97 also prints title strips, including song titles for most of the major artists.

For more information, contact Premier Data Corp., 3001 Reilly Ave., Springfield, IL 62703; (217)528-9000 or (800)720-3282; fax (217)528-4272; Web site (http://www.premierdatacorp.com).

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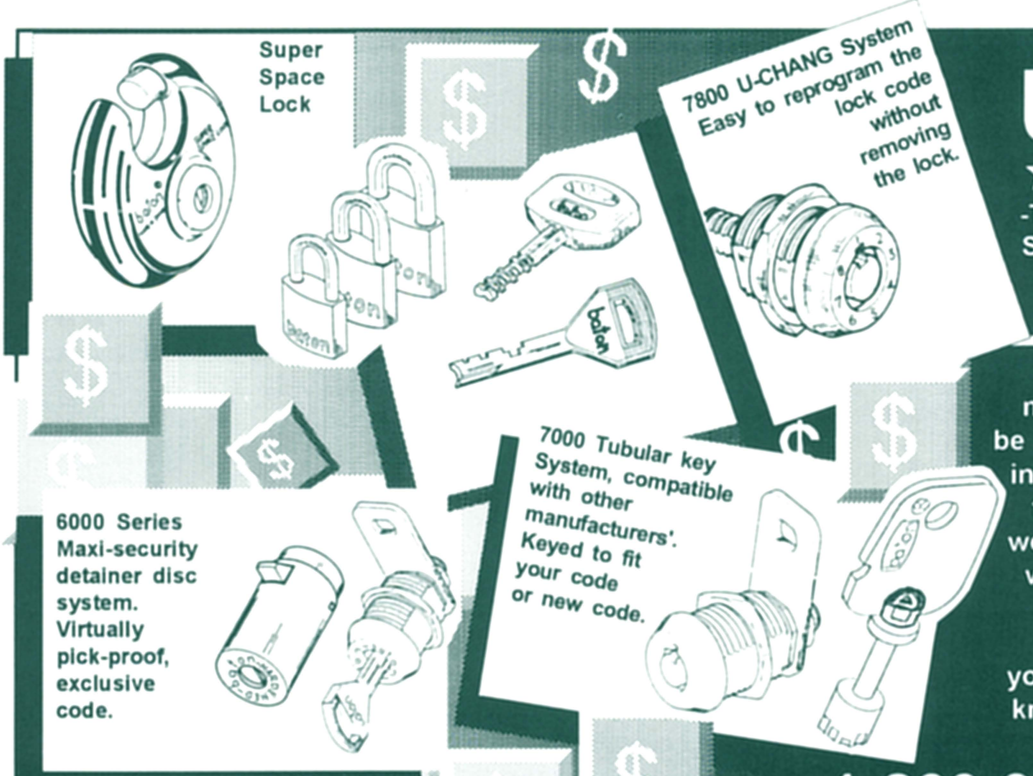
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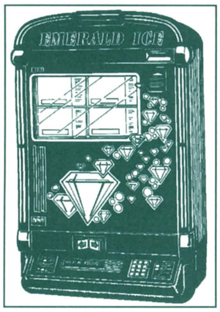

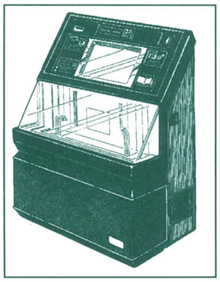

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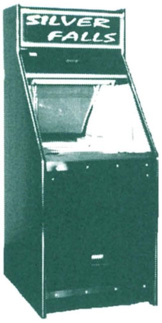

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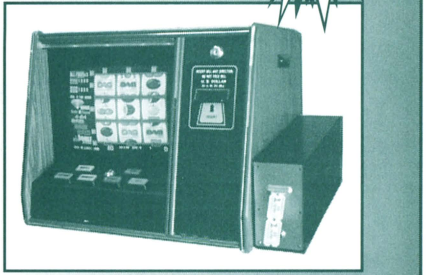

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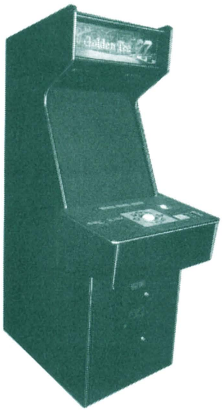

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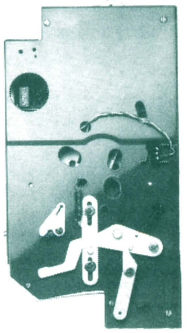

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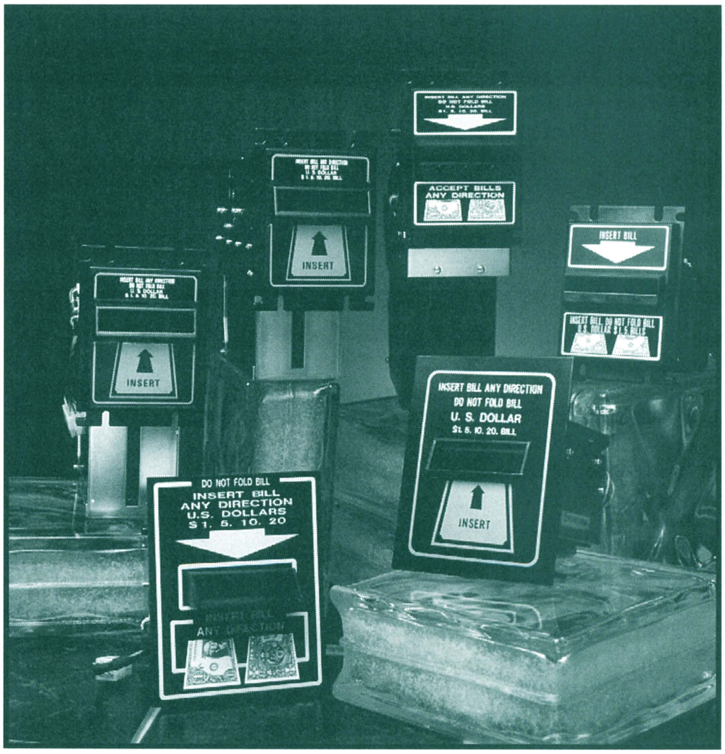
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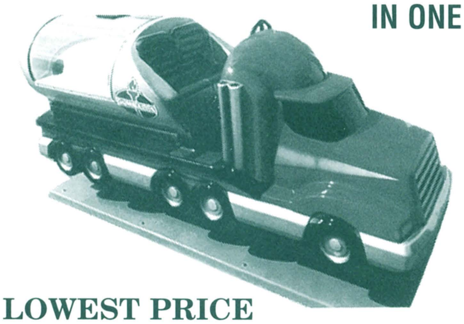

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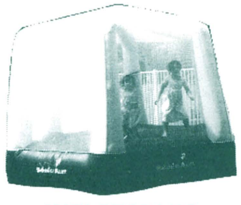

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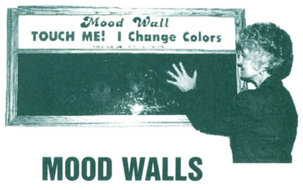
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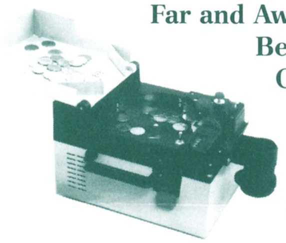

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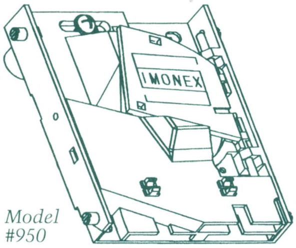

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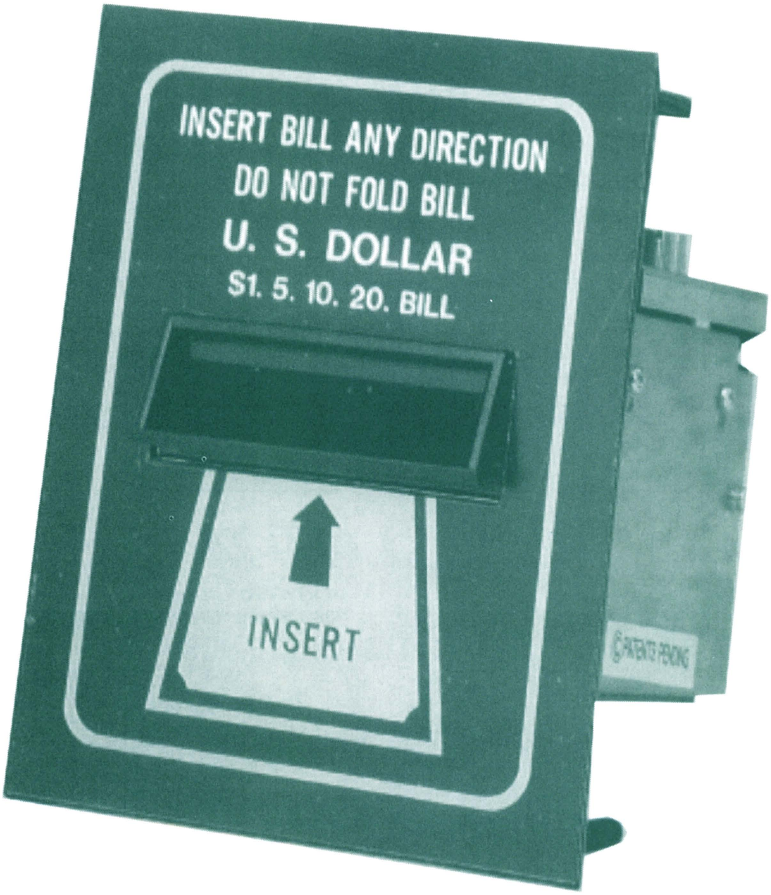
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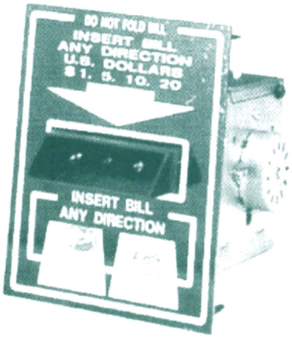
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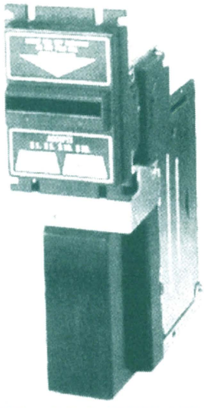

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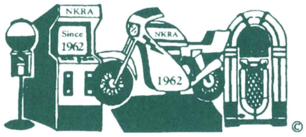

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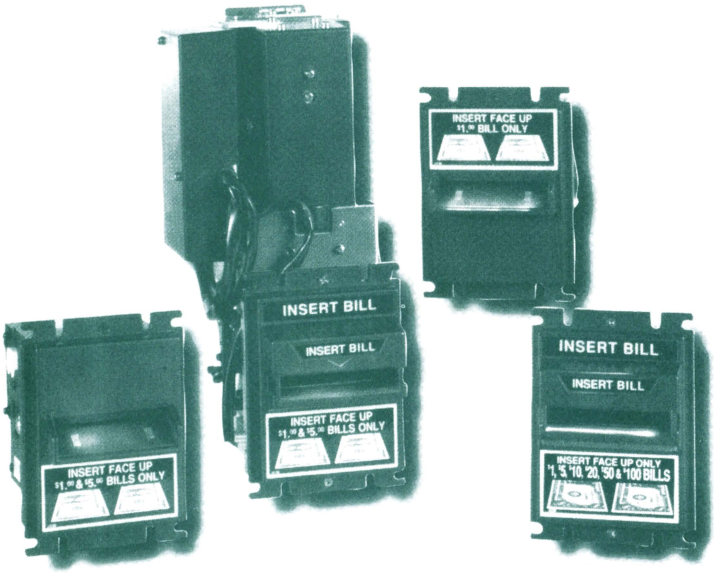
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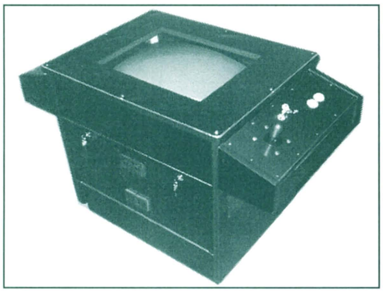

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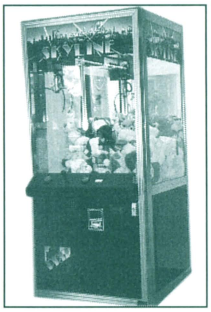

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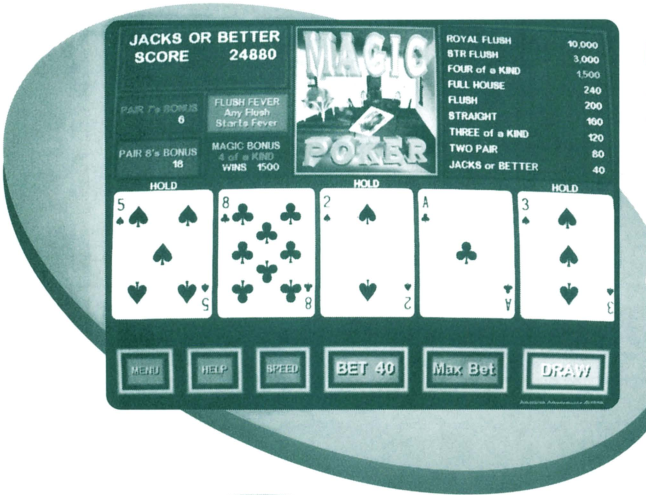

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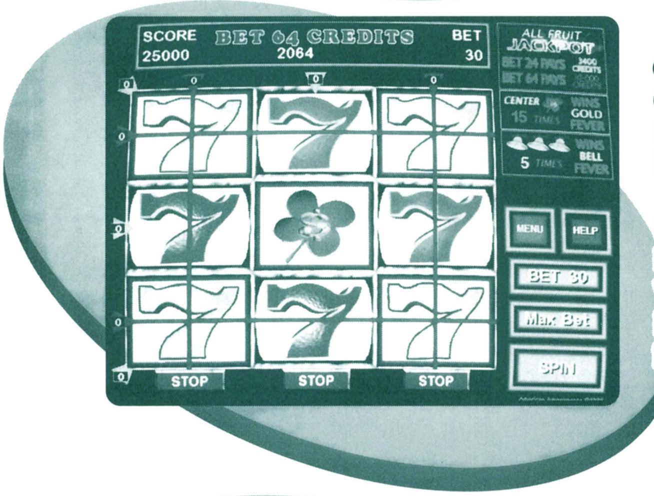

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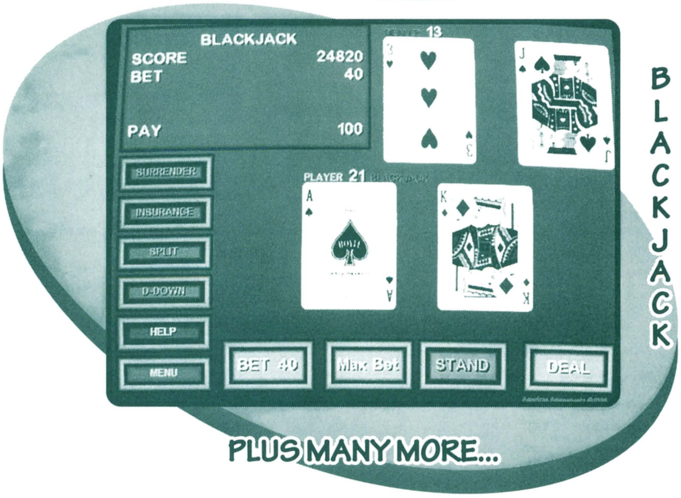

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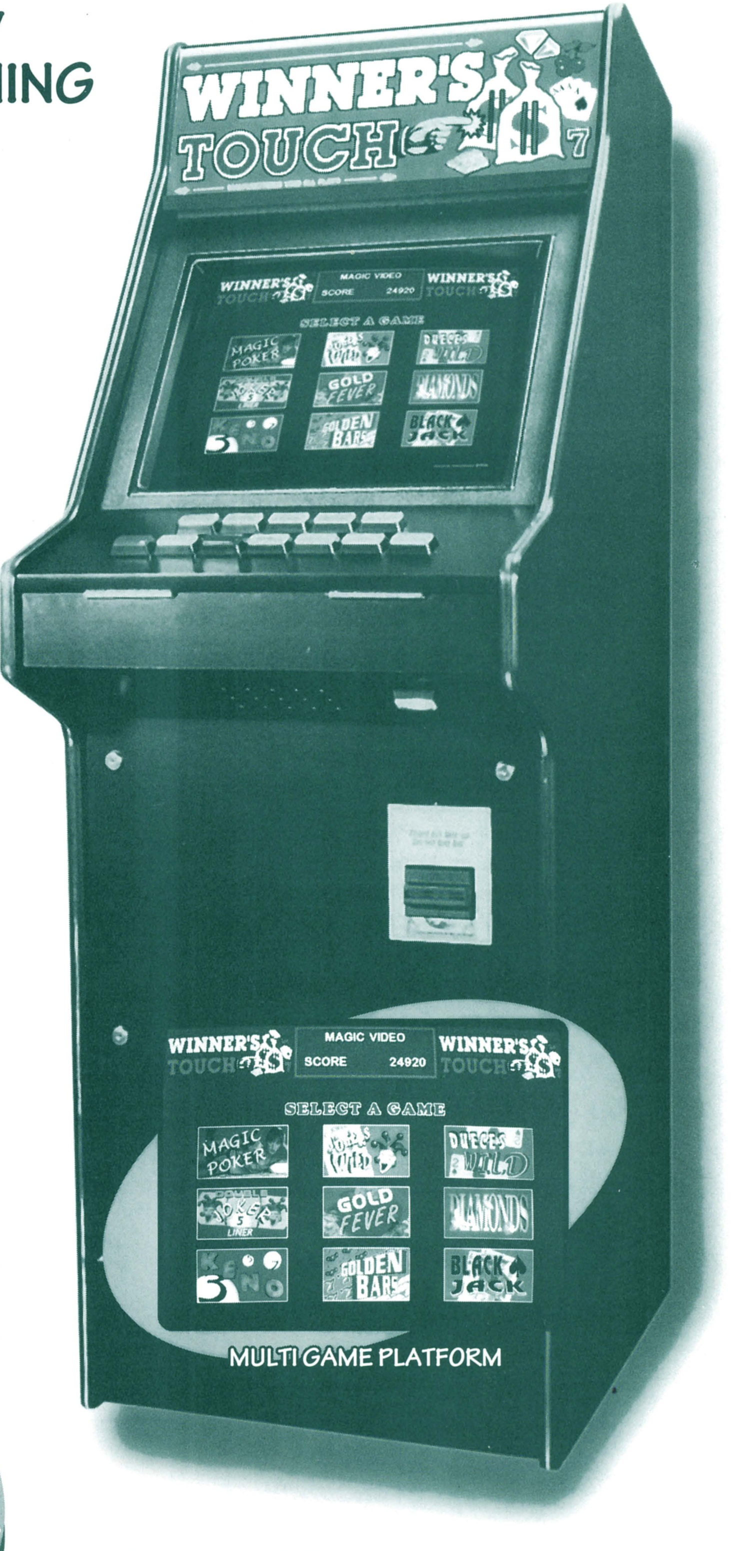

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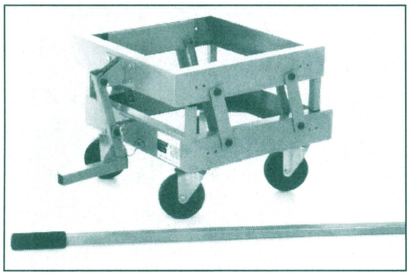

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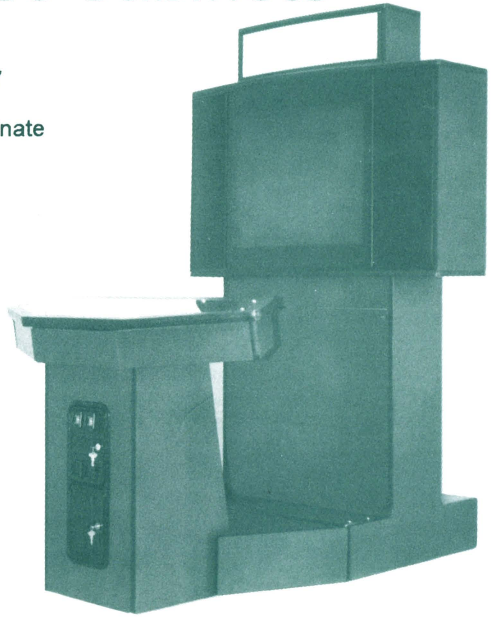

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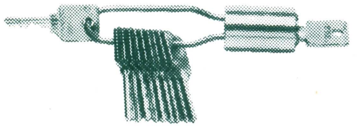

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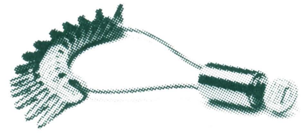

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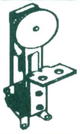

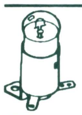

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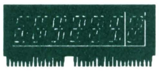

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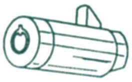

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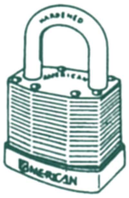

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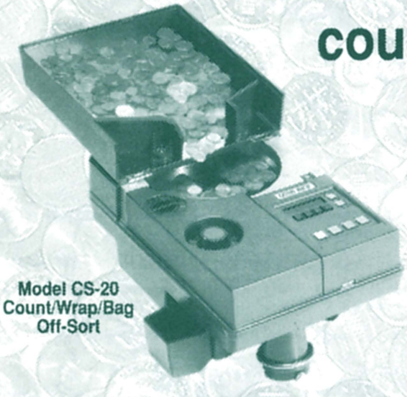

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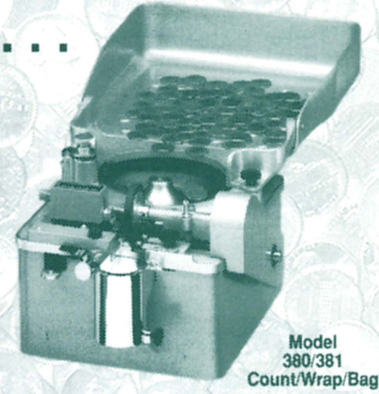

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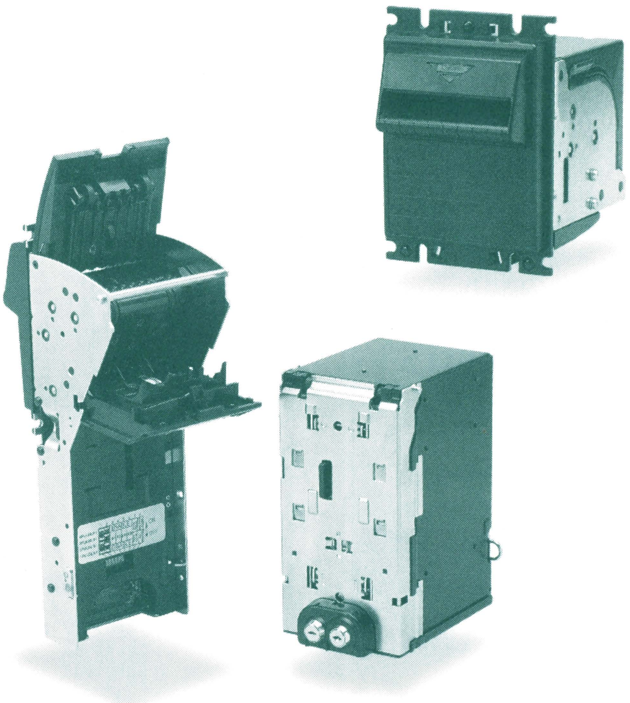

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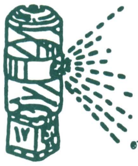

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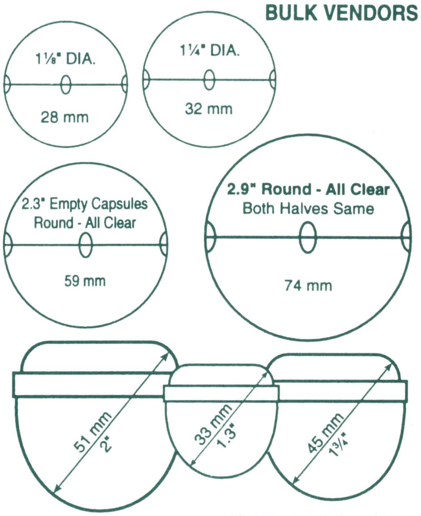
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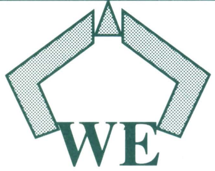

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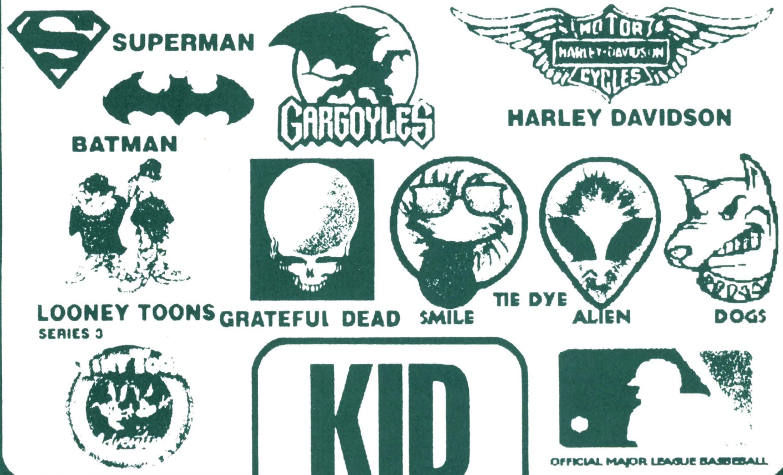
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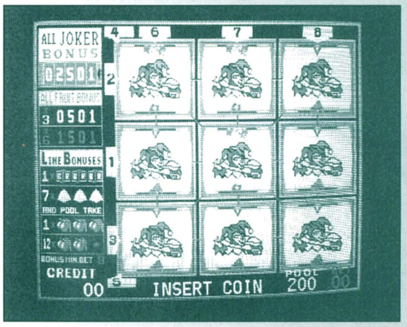
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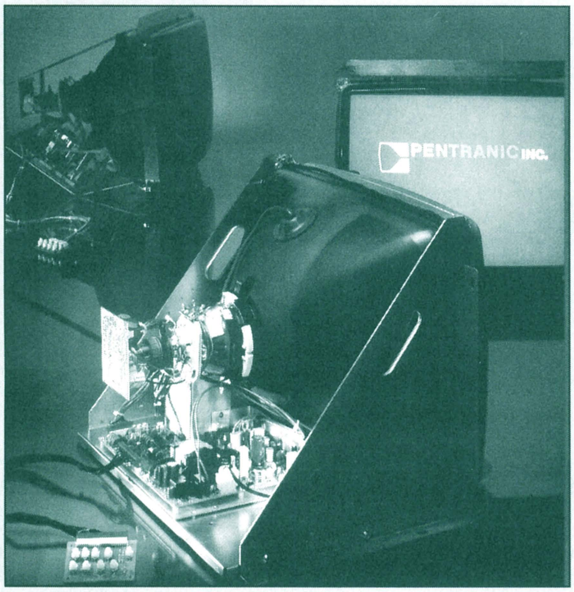

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	3	--	"Los Tucanes De Tijuana"	Secuestro De Amor
	4	--	"Los Tucanes De Tijuana"	Tucanes De Plata
	5	1	"Bronco"	La Ultima Huella
	6	9	"Sparx Y Lorenzo Antonio"	Cantan Corridos
	7	5	"Alejandro Fernandez"	Muy Dentro De Mi Corazon
	8	8	"Vicente Fernandez"	Y Sus Canciones
	9	4	"Banda El Recodo"	Tributo A Juan Gabriel
	10	6	"Los Tucanes De Tijuana"	15 Kilates De Amor
TROPICAL	1	--	"Fito Olivares"	Con Amor Y Con Sabor
	2	2	"Compilation"	Salsa En Calle Ocho 97
	3	1	"Compilation"	Salsamania
	4	4	"Compilation"	Merengon
	5	--	"Merenbooty Girls"	X-tra Hot
	6	--	"Jerry Rivera"	Fresco
	7	--	"Wilfrido Vargas"	Hoy
	8	--	"El General"	Rapa Pan Pan
	9	--	"Alex Bueno"	Mas Ternura
	10	--	"Gloria Estefan"	Abriendo Puertas
POP	1	1	"Selena"	Movie Soundtrack
	2	3	"Enrique Iglesias"	Vivir
	3	5	"Marco Antonio Solis"	En Pleno Vuelo
	4	6	"Grupo Mojado"	Sueno Y Realidad
	5	4	"Ana Gabriel"	Vivencias
	6	2	"Los Mismos"	Juntos Para Siempre
	7	9	"Shakira"	Pies Descalzos
	8	10	"Olga Tanon"	Nuevos Senderos
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	10	7	"Fey"	Tierna La Noche
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July 11-13

7th VNEA Intl. Junior Championships, Sioux City Convention Center, Sioux City, Iowa. Contact VNEA, (800)544-1346 or (517)893-1800; fax (517)893-0103.

August 18-20

Nightclub & Bar Expo, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla. Contact Nightclub & Bar Magazine, (601)236-5510; fax (601)236-5541.

August 21-22

Ohio Coin Machine Assn. 23rd Anniversary Expo, Ramada University Inn & Conference Center, Columbus, Ohio. Contact David Corey or Judy Martin, (614)888-9772; fax (888-9767.

September 23-26

7th Fun Expo, Sands Expo Center, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact Bailey Beeken, (914)993-9200; fax (914)993-9210.

October 16-18

National Automatic Merchandising Assn. National Convention and Trade Show, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla. Contact NAMA, (312)346-0370; fax (312)704-4140.

October 23-25

AMOA Intl. Expo, Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, Ga. Contact AMOA (312)245-1020; fax (312)245-1085.

October 28-30

Amusement Industry Expo '97, I-X Center, Cleveland, Ohio, Call (800)870-EXPO (3956); fax (216)265-2621.

October 30-November 1

AMOA-National Dart Assn. 4th Annual Singles & Doubles International Championships, Radisson Hotel, St. Paul, Minn. Contact Mike Smythe, (800)808-9884; fax (317)387-0999.

November 18-22

79th Intl. Assn. of Amusement Parks and Attractions Convention and Trade Show, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Fla. Contact IAAPA, (703)836-4800; fax (703)836-4801.

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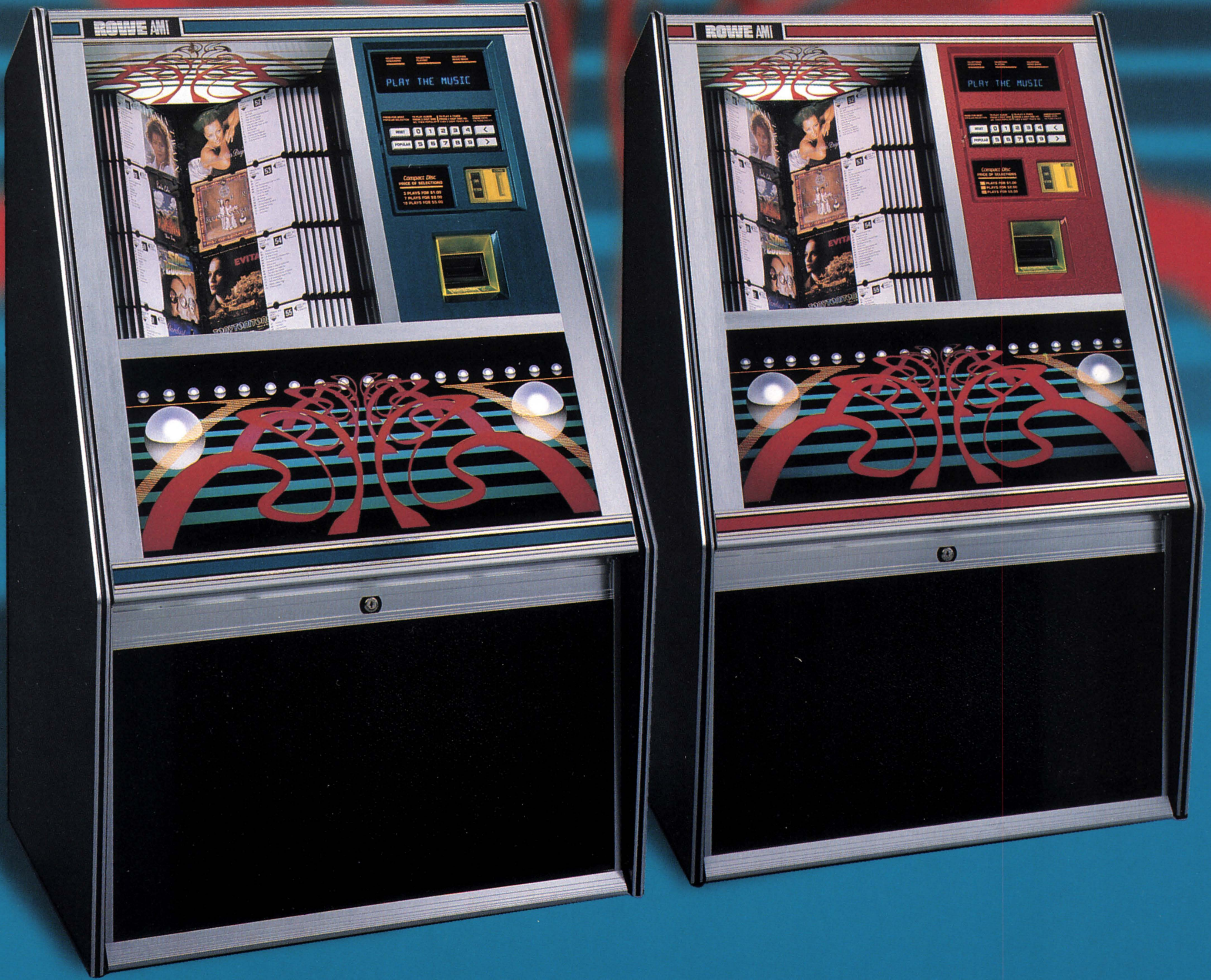
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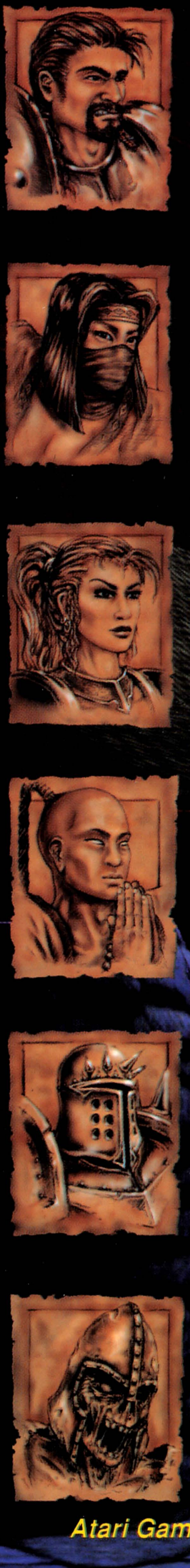

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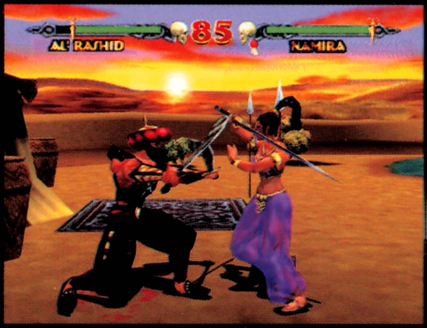
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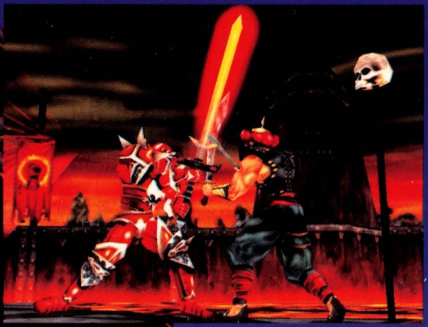

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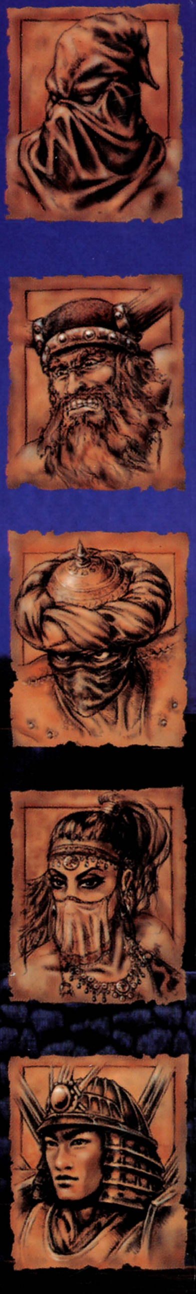

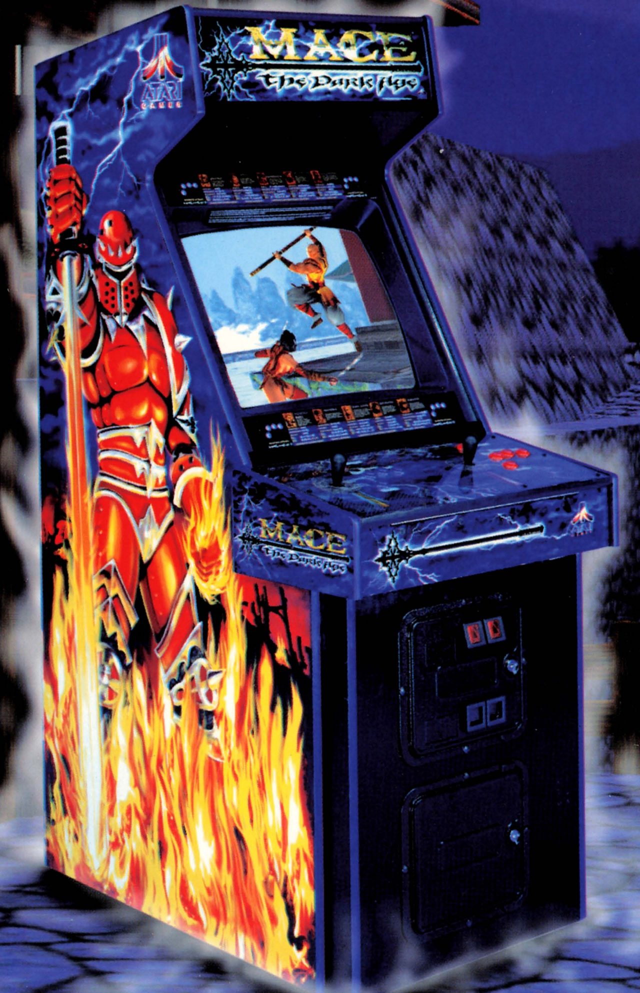
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